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MARCHING MILLIONS

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by

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PREFATORY NOTE

If we are sophisticated we prefer the unexpected. If we are average we like to get what we expect. The title MARCHING MILLIONS is chosen to cater to the sophisticated and this note is meant to satisfy the average. The thought of millions on the march is exciting enough. To follow those millions for many centuries and see what direction they have taken and what has befallen them is, indeed, to participate in their adventure. It gives one hope in the ultimate destiny of humanity even if it does shatter many cherished delusions.

What is *Progress*? What do Sociology, Anthropology, History, Marxism and Gandhianism say about *Progress*? What sort of *Progress* do we want for India? These are the main questions which have absorbed my thought in this book. It is radical if the progressive urge is radical. It is socialistic if the belief that the disinherited masses of India, and the world for that matter, must come into their own is a socialistic belief. Labels are misleading. I would rather not label myself or my writings. Let the reader do that piece of secretarial docketing, if he must.

Many friends, sympathetic and perverse, English, American and Indian, writers and readers, speakers and listeners, of the working class and the shirking class have helped to open the windows of my mind. I could not possibly thank them here by name. Some, perhaps, I do not even know by name. But as I write my heart throbs with a desire to acknowledge the debt I owe. For, had it not been for them, I might still be revelling in the optimistic vagaries of a bygone age. We start life with a certain mental and emotional make-

PREFATORY NOTE

up and a certain world-view. Our observations, experiences and contacts, if we are sensitive enough to be affected by such things, challenge many of our ideals, beliefs, sympathies and prejudices. If we respond to the challenge we must undergo the rigorous discipline of re-thinking and reconstructing our world-view. For these changes no one need apologise. Indeed, they owe the world an apology who are so weak or timid as to cling to the superstitions of another age.

Writers are circumscribed by narrow circumstances which few understand. Many are impelled to preach to us. Many more would like to have us write differently. But they must write who are so commissioned. They must write what they feel needs to be said. Let me console myself that at least I can address to the Spirit of Progress those memorable lines of Shelley's to the West Wind :

“Be thou, Spirit fierce,
My spirit ! be thou me, impetuous one !
Drive my dead thoughts over the universe,
Like withered leaves, to quicken a new birth ;
And by the incantation of this verse,
Scatter, as from an unextinguished hearth
Ashes and sparks, my words among mankind !
Be through my lips to unawakened earth
The trumpet of a prophecy !”

And let that prophecy be : *India shall be free when the masses are free...when the masses are free the world shall be safe.*

JUBBULPORE
Muharram, 1944

C. M.

To
the memory of
my
father,
who may have been shocked by much
that is written here,
but who would have understood.

A POLISH SONG

*Whirlwinds of danger are raging around us,
O'erwhelming forces of darkness assail,
Still in the fight, see advancing before us
Red Flag of Liberty that yet shall prevail !*

*Then forward, ye workers, freedom awaits you,
O'er all the world on the land and the sea,
On with the fight for the cause of humanity !
March ! March, ye toilers ! And the world shall be free.*

*Women and children in hunger are calling,
Shall we be silent to their sorrow and woe ?
While in the fight see our brothers are falling,
Up ! then, united, and conquer the foe !*

*Off with the crown of the tyrants of favour,
Down in the dust with the prince and the peer !
Strike off your chains, all ye brave sons of Labour,
Wake all humanity, for victory is near !*

CHAPTER I

Span of Two Millenia

I

THE idea of progress is like one of those unfortunate waifs entertained by the most unexpected people. By and large, we are glad to be entertained by myths in gorgeous attire and lies in priestly vestments. If we are forced to play the host, we choose a mixed party of confused notions. Indeed, some are so awed by the alarming triumphs of materialism in both hemispheres that they would much rather crawl into Vedic times and try to keep India safe behind the fortification of Vedic texts. Others are so dazzled by the wonders of Western civilization that they would replace everything Indian with foreign imports. Some seek the formula for advancement by making imaginary excursions into Russian Communism or German Nazism. Others hail the *Carkha* as the sole instrument of progress. Some by virtue of their knighthoods or official positions feel that they are baptized into the British way of life which alone is progressive. Others think that India's march forward will begin only when she is free from the foreign yoke. A confusion of thought at a time of national crisis is disastrous. It renders a large number of people impotent. Hence, it is necessary to ask ourselves: What is progress? What sort of progress do we want?

Progress is both a fact and an illusion. The urge for progress has been the making and the ruin of civilization. There are those who see only fluctuations

in the history of man and feel that these fluctuations cannot be regarded as progress. While there are some who hug the bland assurance typical of balmy Victorianism,

"Yet I doubt not thro' the ages
one increasing purpose runs,
And the thoughts of men are widened
with the process of the suns."

The optimist's affirmation of progress is as superficial as the pessimist's denial. Progress cannot be thought of as an escalator, which, whether or not man run in addition to its lift, will inevitably raise humanity to a golden age. Nor can it be understood as a merry-go-round which gives the illusion of motion but leaves mankind just where it began.

It is a fact that humanity for the most part has moved forward from cave-dwellings to sky-scrapers, from the necessity of walking to the facility of flying, from the absence of all means of communications to the marvels of wireless, the radio, telegraph and telephone, in short, from primitive discomforts to the switch-board conveniences of this Cinematographic Age. But it is an illusion to conclude that this advancement is progress and that humanity is happier under the drone of the bomber than it was in the eerie silence of virgin forests. For, actually, it seems that as fast as man has conquered nature he has surrendered those inner resources which produced the heroes of the epic age. As he has succeeded in improving his material conditions of life he has succeeded also in degenerating physically and morally. As Science has raced along with seven-league boots human values have

been left behind and there is to-day more widespread frustration, insecurity, unhappiness and insanity than ever before.

The instruments of knowledge which should have brought heaven upon earth have been used increasingly for purposes of exploitation. The advancement of civilization which should have brought the blessings of maximum freedom, unity and peace has brought the curse of an albinocracy that keeps two-thirds of mankind in a state of emasculating servitude. The supposedly most civilized and progressive peoples shew by their paroxysms of vandalism that they are more barbaric than those whom they are pleased to call 'backward.' While the so-called 'backward' people who pride themselves on being more spiritually advanced lack the wisdom to cultivate the material conditions through which their spirituality could express itself realistically. The West like a soul-less body feeds the vultures of Capitalism. The East like a bodiless spirit is imprisoned in its own futility. From many a heart the painful question is wrung : whither mankind ?

The Ancients were enamoured of the glittering procession of the gods and felt their highest good lay in being militant camp-followers. They paid just enough attention to their material environment as was necessary to keep them alive and happy and thus fit to serve the gods. The Moderns are dazed by the brilliant dawn of Science in which the pale procession of the gods has faded out of sight. They are eager to exploit their material environment as much as is necessary to give them mastery over other men. The Ancients forced ahead without having a theory of progress. The

Moderns have theories of progress without the capacity to safeguard their advance. The religious outlook of the Ancients was focussed on eternal values to the exclusion of physical needs. The scientific outlook of the Moderns is focussed on temporal values to the exclusion of right relations between man and man, and between man and machine. The difference between Ancients and Moderns in India, nevertheless, is far more difficult to analyse. In some things the Ancients were more modern than the best Moderns. In other things some prominent Moderns are third-rate copies of the best Ancients. We lack the nerve to be thoroughgoing Ancients. To be forthright Moderns we lack the material conditions. In our frenzied attempt to be modern we imitate the West. In the sorry confusion of a jingoism that is fast becoming fashionable we mistake hybridization for progress.

Curiously enough, not a few reformers find their surest consolation harking back

To the splendour that was 'Ind,
To the glory that was Greece,
And the grandeur that was Rome.

But apart from the reformer's zeal for the purity of bygone ages of the pedant's desire to impress by a show of comparative scholarship, it is convenient to trace ideas in a historical perspective. In ancient civilizations there are two representative trends of thought : the Indian and Jewish on the Asiatic side and the Greek and Roman on the European. The others are more or less permutations of one or other of these.

Plato's musings on history, characteristic of the Greek consciousness, influenced European thought

almost up to the time of Hegel. According to Plato the course of cosmic life is divided into cycles each seventy-two thousand years in duration. During the first half of each cycle, when creation comes freshly from the hands of Deity, mankind is in a happy, ideal state. Then decline sets in. The latter half of each cycle sinks from bad to worse. Once more Deity, must take it in hand and make all things new. Such a cyclic notion admits of no idea of progress. In fact, the Greeks were too suspicious of change to be able to conceive of progress as such. By their contemplative mode of consciousness they were fitted to be artists. To them the perfect was achieved in an ideal state, and, like the Parthenon, could not be improved. Any change that took place must mean subtraction from the ideally perfect. They could not think of time holding out any possibilities of advancement. For them the passage of time took man farther away from the ideal state. Change was a sure sign of decline. Nothing save divine intervention could save mankind once the period of decline had set in. Many an Indian would perhaps want to hail the Greeks as first cousins.

The major premise of Greek thought may be expressed thus: The Good is that which does not change. *Becoming* is the antithesis of *Being* and *Being* not *Becoming* is the highest reality. The very idea of change is excluded from the essence of the divine. God does not act because action implies reaction and the possibility of *becoming*. God is the eternally Changeless contemplating the eternally changeless. Thus, theory and practice become antithetical. The Greeks rejected practice and idealized the theoretical life. To this deal, they held, that human life could only approximate at

best. Plato goes so far as to insist that the philosopher, who alone can rule, must desire above all things the life of contemplation. The *rishis* of old would have delighted Plato as rulers. But the necessities of the practical life are antagonistic to the ideal. The contemplative quest for the ideal must not be hampered by the contradictions of the practical life.

On the contrary, the Romans were not artists like the Greeks. Their pragmatic mode of consciousness enabled them to achieve feats of engineering and of legal and administrative constructions. They believed in change. They took a pride in building on the achievements of the past. They expected great things from the future. Seneca says: "The days will come when those things which now lie hidden, time and human diligence will bring to light." They had the intellectual and material conditions out of which a theory of progress could have been expected. Lucretius observes how by the development of agriculture and navigation, the building of cities and the establishment of laws, the manufacture of physical conveniences and the creations of artistic beauty man had risen, gradually advancing to his present height. The Romans understood the practical need for the maintenance and extension of power. But they could not comprehend the need to use power for creative human ends. They had the will-to-power divorced from the intention of spending power for the achievement of universal human progress. Thus, the Romans lacked the insight to perceive and formulate the progressive purpose in the process of history as a whole. Changes remained to them only fluctuations, which at best could be of

advantage to extend their power.

It is significant that even the Stoics saw in history not a purposive advance but a recurrent rise and fall, so that all apparent change for good or ill was the tidal effect on an essentially unchanging sea. Marcus Aurelius says: "He who is forty years old, if he has any understanding at all, has, by virtue of the uniformity that prevails, seen all things which have been and all that will be." This note of satiety was expressed in an earlier age as "There is nothing new under the sun." Power introverted, turned in on its own greatness and success, inevitably brings such a mood. Without the techniques for fresh conquests of nature and without the intention to apply these for greater social effectiveness on an extra-national scale, an age that succeeds a period of great advancement is sure to be surfeited. And from being surfeited it goes on to a period of decline. It is common to all people. And, if nothing else, this note of satiety proves the absence of a theory of progress which otherwise would give the impetus for further effort. Hence, as a rule, a period of surfeited decay follows on the heels of a progressive age.

II

Turning from the West to the East, we come upon a characteristically different phenomenon in India. The religio-contemplative consciousness of the Hindus delights in using religious terminology to express all its insights whether scientific or philosophical, esthetic or social. Through their astronomical and astrological studies of the star, their psychological deductions regarding the conscious and unconscious mind, and their

ethical reflections concerning the moral law, the ancient Indian *rishis* were persuaded that the principle of *Rita* (dialectical purpose) must be valid. They held that there must be an immanent purpose controlling and directing the universe from within through a series of unfoldment and accomplishment.

On the material as well as the moral plane this principle of *Rita* provides a key to the understanding of the evolutionary process. The three *gunas* (*rajas*, *tamas*, *sattva*) are not to be mistaken as static categories of the material world but as dynamic qualities of the universal process of evolution. *Tamas* can be understood not as mere inertness but the potentiality latent in the universe, the eternal *thesis* inherent in matter. *Rajas* can be understood not as mere force leading to inevitable chaos but the urge for development at the heart of things, the eternal *antithesis* inherent in matter. *Sattva* can be understood not as static equilibrium but the informing nexus of order between the potentiality and the urge leading to endless *syntheses*. Thus the actual emerges from the potential, carrying within itself yet greater and more developed possibilities for further development. It is this kind of progress that is postulated by the principle of dialectical purpose. If a theory of progress did not emerge from such excellent premises it was chiefly because a static interpretation threw the emphasis on the moral aspect.

The cosmic principle of *Rita* has its moral counterpart in the law of *Karma*. It postulates the individual's moral duty to co-operate with the immanent purpose for the emergence of higher degree of actuality and for the conversion of the unreal into the real. Thus, can

order be brought into human life through conscious discipline. In its passage through the centuries the law of *Karma* has undergone unfortunate distortions and has come to be regarded as a mechanistic law of requital, measure for measure, here and hereafter. Considered thus, it loses its vital challenge and meaning. *Karma* insists that any violation of the moral law must prove self-frustrating. Whereas collaboration with it must prove liberating. Man is not an end in himself. He is not the measure of all things. In a profound sense man is a means to a divine end. He must renounce the hedonistic ideal for the intention as self-realization. The process of self-realization is the process of progress. Thus, the self was divorced from its material environment. By emphasis material advancement was divorced from moral and spiritual progress. We are still paying the penalty for that divorce.

When we turn to the Jewish people we find a very different but an exceedingly significant outlook. Whereas other people speak of Asoka having conquered a certain territory or Akbar having passed a certain law, the Jewish historian says: "God brought his people out of the land of Egypt." The religious consciousness of the Jews envisages history as the act of God. The intention of God, they believe, is the realization of his purpose for them, the Chosen People. Thus, without the metaphysical acumen of Vedantic thinkers or the practical skill of the Romans, the Jewish prophets, nonetheless, turned their reflection into an effort to discover the principles of righteous social living. Their religious reflection became a continuous paraphrase of history and their historic experience became a progressive

revelation of the nature and purpose of God. Their life was regulated by no complicated philosophical system or religious ritualism but by the Mosaic Law which is a formulation of right relations between man and man as a means of establishing right relations with God.

The Hebrew prophetic tradition does not discover an idea of progress as the development of Hebrew culture is not a development of ideas. But, as the history of the Jewish people itself becomes the working out of the implications of its consciousness of God's purpose, we find in it insights into the moral laws that govern progress. Not only loyalty to the true God, Yahwe, but the maintenance of justice, freedom and community among themselves determined their well-being in the sight of God and their prosperity in the sight of men. This, as they understood it, was God's will. If they lived by it, God would bless them and bring them to felicity. If they violated it they would suffer adversity and even bondage. The uniqueness of the Hebraic prophetic insight does not lie in the fact that it visualized material prosperity and advancement as a result of moral and religious integrity, but rather that it understood moral and religious integrity in terms of social justice. This is best illustrated in the Sabbatical system enunciated in the Mosaic Law, a system which has no parallel either in the Laws of Hamurabi or Manu. Prophet after prophet urged the need for repentance for social and racial sins so as to ensure that the nation would be happy and not come under God's judgment. (Unfortunately, Christianity lost this perspective during the rise of Capitalism in Europe.)

It may be observed in passing that it is this strong social sense driven deep into their racial consciousness which renders Jews more responsive to Communism than any other racial group. Not only was Karl Marx himself a Jew, but in almost every European country where the gospel of Marx spread, it was chiefly due to the courageous missionaries and devoted champions that Marxism found among the Jews.

Vicissitudes of fortune are a characteristic of Jewish history. But, perhaps, the darkest period was during their Babylonian captivity. All through these days of tribulation their prophets urged repentance and consoled them with the Messianic hope. Then came the conquests of Roman Imperialism. The Hebrew prophets did not weary in proclaiming that the Messiah would come suddenly and save them, defeat their enemies and establish the "Kingdom of God," in which the Chosen People would be happy for ever more. Of course, this expectation was not, as under the circumstances it could not be, a progressive hope. It was an expectation of cataclysmic triumph. It did not envisage the prospect of planful work over a long period achieving success and the furtherance of personal, social and national interests. It was, rather, the hope of a divine invasion of history.

When Jesus began his propaganda tours in the first century A. D. the Messianic expectation grew into a defiant belief and robed itself with increasing pomp. The early Christians inherited this glorious belief in God's coming sovereignty over the whole earth which would mean the consummation of all human desires for progress, prosperity and happiness. It took two

centuries for this hope to grow dim. Hope deferred makes the heart sick. When the heart is sick men accept substitutes with some alacrity. Moving out from its days of political persecution to a period of political favour, the Christian Church began to allure men's hearts with its inviting prospects of power and wealth. It did not take long for the expanding, flourishing Church on earth to become the centre of gravity for Christians in place of the tardy "Kingdom of Heaven."

The Church could not evolve an idea of progress although the Christ-impulse was radically progressive. The Church's intellectual life was entangled in its attempts to stabilize the truth already formulated by the Early Church, to fight all heresy, and to punish any adventurous search for new truth. Indeed, the growing economic complications of the Church and its insistence on the rewards to be bestowed in Heaven tended to confirm rather than dissipate the static notion of history. This life, it was taught, was only a brief probation. Suffering here would mean joy Hereafter. Success here would mean an eternity of tears. Progress was a snare. All that was required to gain a passport to Heaven was submission to the Church and a life of prayer. The theocratic dictatorship was every whit as rigorous as the Fascist, Nazi or Communist. This rigorous theocratic dictatorship was naturally inherited by the Missionary Movement. The atrocities of "the purge" in Germany, Russia or Italy, which have horrified the world, are at least matched by the atrocities of the Inquisition which was "the purge" carried out by the Church. European thought was thus made stagnant.

From the twelfth century A. D. to the sixteenth the analogy used by European thinkers to describe society is the same. It is nothing but an adaptation of the orthodox Pauline metaphor used to describe the Church. Society like the human body is an organism composed of different members. Each member has his own functions: prayer, defence, trade or agriculture, or service, very similar to the functions of the Hindu caste system. Each must receive the means suited to its station and claim no more. *Within* each class there must be strict equality. For if one appropriates the living of two some one will go short. But *between* the classes there must be judicious inequality. Otherwise a class cannot perform its duty or enjoy its rights. And both duties and rights are God-given. Under the dictatorship of the Church the gross facts of the social order were accepted with surprising docility by the Europe of the Middle Ages. Of course, the Church held out palliatives. It organized charity, education and humanitarian relief. But behind this facade of benevolence and religious sanction its policy was one of protection and repression—protection of the un-Christian *status quo* and repression of the Christian status-to-be. Tawney puts it into an unforgettable sentence. "Baptized by the Church, privilege and power became office and duty." It is the same to-day.

The rise of modern progressive hopes out of the quagmire of the Dark Ages is one of the epic occurrences of history. One's faith in the progressive destiny of the world is renewed when one considers how almost by a miracle Europe stepped out of a chronic invalid's bed and astonished the world with feats of progress. The

causes which together worked this miracle are now, after three centuries, too complexly interwoven to be unravelled except in a historian's library. One can only trace some of the major factors which contributed to the conversion of a paralysed Europe into a militant Palladin of progress.

Scientific advancement is by far the most important of these factors. With the furtherance of science men began to throw off their intellectual vassalage to antiquity and to religious institutionalism. Without such an intellectual release no country can move forward. The new-found possibility of mastering the hidden resources of nature filled men with stimulating confidence and eager energy. Science challenged authoritarianism. It forged new techniques. It shattered old superstitions. It gave Europe the *mantra*: Be free! India needs this scientific attitude on a larger scale so that the average Indian breaks loose from his thralldom to the past and to religious or social fetishes.

World-wide exploration contributed materially to the development of the modern outlook. Who could live couped up in a stale, narrow world when the old frontiers were crumbling and new continents beckoned with glamorous prospects of experiment and adventure? Who could come in contact with new peoples and unheard of civilizations and discover strange products without being stirred to rebel against time-honoured prejudices? Travel abroad would provide the broadening and inspiring influence that we need to lead the country forward through political and economic barricades to the path of progress.

Closely allied with these two elements was the

Copernican revolution. When the Copernican theory was proved the credit and authority of antiquity received a stunning blow. Men were disillusioned. They awoke to the fact that in their quest for knowledge they would have to turn not backward to the past, as hitherto, but forward to the future, not backward to sacrosanct texts but forward to new discoveries. The Medieval Age was buried under its own debris. A new age arrived. It was aglow with excitement. It brought new inventions, new discoveries, new knowledge. New social and economic possibilities opened before men's eyes. New ventures became possible. Progress became the watchword. And Europe has not paused even for a decade since then.

Nevertheless, progress is never possible exclusively in the realm of ideas and moral values. Primarily, progress is made in the material and social world. Gandhian idealists and Fabian socialists need to remember that any progress that is real is an advancement on previous ways of living, that is, on previous ways of production and exchange and previous modes of social and political organization. This conflicts with the old influences and is influenced by the change in modes of thought and belief. It involves planned action to win intellectual and political recognition for the new order of things. The astounding progress of Europe of the last four hundred years must remain inexplicable unless we recognize that it was a struggle to get rid of the old feudal ways of living and modes of thought and belief as embodied in a feudal structure of society and to substitute the new way of life, thought and action made increasingly possible by the development of the means of production and facilities of

exchange. This European struggle for progress is divided into two phases. The first phase culminated in three grim battles, one against the Church, the next against the King, the third against the Nobility. The first battle resulted in the defeat of the feudal Roman Catholic Church, the second in the overthrow of the feudal Royalists who supported absolute monarchy in Britain, and the third in the annihilation of feudalism in France and then in all Europe. The second phase was one in which the post-feudal Capitalism entered upon its dazzling career of conquest, turning first into Imperialism and then into Fascism.

How did this *middle class* arise which played such an important role in the destruction of feudalism? It did not arise out of a set of ideas nor out of the brow of Jove. Scientific development brought into being improved mechanical tools and appliances and also improved methods of navigation and transport. The discovery of new lands revealed attractive sources of raw material and markets or possibilities of exchange. These two sets of factors encouraged the manufacture of commodities for profitable sale. That adventurous class which changed from an agricultural to a trading community in response to these changed conditions came to be called the *middle class*. Now, the independence of this rising middle class to profit by commercial enterprise was obstructed at every step by established social relations as between feudal lord and serf and all the institutional, religious, political and ideological conventions that had become bulwarks of feudalism. The Roman Catholic Church, much like the institution of caste in India, was at once the supreme expression

and the despotic guardian of feudal conventions. The Pope was the religious overlord of all Christendom. As Tawney says: "Practically, the Church was an immense vested interest, implicated to the hilt in the economic fabric, especially on the side of land tenure and agriculture. Itself the greatest of landowners it could no more quarrel with the feudal structure than the Ecclesiastical Commission, the largest mineral owners to-day, can lead a crusade against royalties." Thus, it became the first antagonist of the rising middle class.

The rebel commercial class saw that if it was to prosper and gain strength the power of the Roman Church would have to be bridled. Thus, the rebel Protestants fought and in time defeated the Pope and inaugurated Protestantism which was in keeping with the individualism of the emerging social order. It is interesting to remember that almost the entire recruitment of Protestant Christianity was from the ranks of the rebel commercial class. It was not a chance coincidence nor the perversity of Communists that made the champions of the market the champions of the Reformation. It was a logical as well as a practical necessity. The power of the Roman Church obstructed no group other than the *vaisyas* rebels of the middle class. Hence, they only had a motive for the revolt against the Church. In Britain during the first half of the sixteenth century the Roman Church was destroyed altogether. In its place a new State Church was set up. The lands of the Roman Church were made over to the new middle class landlords. Luther defeated Rome on behalf of the agrarian middle class of Germany and Calvin on behalf of the industrial middle class of

Holland. Lutheranism and Calvinism soon spread all over Europe wherever the middle class felt the feudal authority of the Pope irksome. Strachey says very pertinently: "How necessary was this preliminary religious revolution to the growth of vigorous buying and selling may be gauged from the fact that in the one country in Europe, in Spain, where the Catholic Church was neither bent nor broken, until 1931, Capitalism has never flourished."

Six generations later (1640-88) an English king lost his head on the block because he supported the Royalist monopoly-holders against the aggressive *vaisyas* rebels. Cromwell, Hampden, Pym and Elliot were not feudal overlords. They were enterprising members of the agrarian middle class. They were not incarnations of selfless patriotism as some British historians tell us. Cromwell and Hampden and their Roundheads, land-owners, merchants and commercial squires—the great Whigs—were hardheaded and ambitious *banyas*. Their wealth, prosperity and existence depended on the absence of royal monopoly. They had no alternative but to defeat the king and set up a government that was favourable to their interests, *i.e.*, unrestricted buying and selling or a free market. Ideological and emotional factors combined with the economic factors and the people were roused to fight against the 'divine right of kings' and protect their 'democratic' rights. But the democracy that was established after the execution of Charles the Second did not safeguard any interests save those of the great Whigs. The lower middle class had contributed a good deal in men and money towards the Revolution. But the democratic government did

not bother about their claims. That is why the Whigs wanted a King but they wanted to be the King-makers. They wanted monarchy but a 'constitutional monarchy' so that they could rule through the King. That was the beginning of the *Vaisya* Government of Britain which has been given the exalted name of Democracy. But one thing must be conceded. It did make Britain rich, powerful and progressive.

Another six generations later (1789-1815) the French *vaisyas* raised the standard of revolt against the Nobility. The French Revolution routed and wiped out feudalism in France. It asserted the power of the rising middle class which believed that a man should enjoy the fruit of his labour. If his labour produced more fruit of one kind than he could enjoy he should seek a free market where it could be sold and where such fruit of other people's labour as he wanted could be bought. The liberty was the liberty to own private property. The equality was the equality of opportunity to buy and sell. The fraternity was the fraternity to fight against all obstacles. France got rid of monarchy and founded a Republic. Yet it was not the government of the people. It was the government of the middle class, the class to which Danton belonged. And this after the French people in general had displayed heroic determination and almost a savage desire to be free from the oppression of the Nobles.

It is not improbable that if Napoleon had not stepped on the stage just when he did, the ruling class in France would have lost their power. But Napoleon did arrive. He became their perfect leader. They readily crowned and exalted him to the status of Emperor

because he represented the aspirations of the commercial middle class. In every country of Europe, except Russia and Spain, Napoleon conquered because the middle class of every country supported him as their liberator from the tyranny of feudal society. In Russia and Spain no large middle class existed. In both countries Napoleon failed. To be sure there were other factors also which contributed to his failure in Spain and Russia. But the other factors by themselves would not have been able to foil Napoleon's ambition had a middle class existed in the two countries which wanted emancipation from feudalism. Napoleon's victories, however, alarmed the British aristocrats who had turned *vaisyas* and the *banyas* who had been raised to the peerage and who together formed the Whig government of Britain. Napoleon personified France's capitalistic and imperialistic rivalry with Britain. He also made exploitation more difficult for the Whigs by destroying feudalism in Europe. He had to be curbed. It is noteworthy that Britain chose an aristocrat *vaisyas*, Arthur Wellesly, Duke of Wellington, who had formerly served the East India Company to meet Napoleon. Wellington incarnated the British system as much as Napoleon did the French. Wellington's class-interests were at stake more than Napoleon's. The Whig government could afford to spend more money on the war against their antagonist than the French could because the Whigs were plundering their Indian Empire while Napoleon's finances had been strained. At Waterloo the British system won.

But Waterloo was an empty victory for Britain and an even emptier one for Wellington's class. Napoleon

was exiled. But he had unleashed the hounds of nationalism in every country of Europe. Did the hounds not allow Britain a peaceful opportunity to exploit and grow rich. Their snarling and snapping caused her trouble and expense. And finally she was hounded into World War I with its gigantic expenditure in men and money and into World War II with even greater losses. In its European sense nationalism was a passion to make one's own country richer and more powerful than others and thus be able to compel weaker nations to take loans, buy goods and supply cheap raw material in the interests of one's own ruling class. Meanwhile a radical change had taken place in the means of production. Power-driven machines had made large-scale industries possible. Large-scale industries offered stupendous profits to be invested in the Empire. The new industrial middle as distinct from the old commercial middle class to which the aristocrat *vaisya*, Wellington, belonged, had grown in wealth and strength. This capitalist class now clamoured for a recognition of its power. By the Reform Bill of 1832 the new capitalist class in Britain superseded the class for which Wellington had fought at Waterloo. Henceforth the dominant ruling class was the capitalist class. Capitalism had been established. Empires had been established for the hunting excursions of capitalism. The soldiers of the market had won. Their descendants organized the Panzer-divisions of nationalism and progress. Under the intoxication of nationalism each capitalist State in Europe, some more than others, Britain more than all, went recklessly along plundering, cheating, killing and making their countries rich and

powerful and progressive. The triumph of capitalism brought about the enslavement of Africa and Asia and the exploitation of weaker European countries. It ensured the magnificence of 19th-century Europe. It has necessitated the terrific turmoil of the 20th-century world. Nevertheless, the noontide of capitalism has been a veritable age of marvels and splendour and progress.

This rapid survey of the world yesterday and to-day must prove disconcerting to an Indian. It brings home the fact that the Indian countryside with all its vast possibilities, its romance and its charm is still in the darkness of feudalism. While progressive nations are cleaving the clouds in flashing aeroplanes India still travels in jolting bullock-carts. While Science has given men mastery over the tremendous resources of nature we in India still fall down in awe before little stone-gods. While other backward countries, Russia and Turkey, are forging ahead with might and main we are told that our salvation is in going back to more primitive ways of living. Simplicity of life is made synonymous with backwardness. We might as well face the inexorable facts of History and realize that the mythical age of the Ramayana will never come back. Even our own sages have proclaimed that *Dvapara-yuga* or Tribal Age is gone; the *Treta-yuga* or Feudal Age is gone; the *Kali-yuga* or Capitalist Age is soon to end. *Sat-yuga* or the Age of Justice is soon to begin. Does this process apply to India? Europe is travelling the way foreseen by Indian sages. Will India be able to take the magnificent leap from the *Treta-yuga* into

Sat-yuga, from Feudalism into Socialism? On her capacity to perform this feat will depend her progress and her destiny.

CHAPTER II

Social Facts

TO the average Indian, if indeed such matters distract his attention at all, 'progress' means little more than a strange legend of the West. We ourselves are so caught in the deadly routine of tradition and necessity, "*Aham Brahmasmi* !" and "*Ji Huzur* !" that it seems wanton to indulge in the luxury of thinking about 'progress.' While, according to Christopher Dawson, "To-day to the average European, and still more to the average American, Progress consists in the spread of the new urban-mechanical civilization : it means more cinemas, motor cars for all, wireless installations, more elaborate methods of killing people, purchase on the hire-system, preserved fruits, and picture papers." And, smile as we may, many there be in our intelligentsia who pay extravagantly for the cheap varnish of European civilization. Thus varnished they are sure of their worth. They are certain that they are modern and progressive. They want for India the same urban-mechanical civilization that has become a nightmare to Western sociologists. By disuse their thinking apparatus seems to have become so jammed that they cannot understand that imitation is the way by which slaves flatter their masters. They cannot see that internationalism does not imply murdering one's own Motherland. They cannot grasp the simple fact that progress can

never be achieved by sedulous aping. India has her scheme of values. She will reject many features of Western civilization which fall below her standards. She will adopt anything that proves valuable in the European tradition and fits her needs. But India will sign her death-warrant if she imports European civilization *in toto*.

Having said this one must hasten to add that modern developments in the West can teach us an important lesson : Science must be harnessed for the service of mankind. It cannot be denied that human existence has been transformed by the mechanical control of the forces of nature. The application of science to daily life has produced innumerable conveniences. Man's conquest of those natural forces which he once dreaded and deified has increased the speed of progress. But it is to be regretted that this new type of industrial-scientific civilization has led to an ironically gigantic increase both in magnificence and squalor, life-saving devices and death-dealing weapons, humanitarianism and savagery. This need not have happened. The Machine will always be a valuable servant but a vicious master. So long as the machine is made to serve humanity its advantages will be assured. So long as conscience is not banished from the affairs of men the machine can never master man. Only when man allows himself to be mechanized does he hand over his superiority to the machine. The machine is deified. Disaster follows. It must.

Men of the keen perception of Ruskin, Tolstoy and Gandhi have naturally preached a radical turning away from the victorious but anti-human civilization of the

West and a return to the simplicities of the past or a flight to the forest. Such prophets have been laughed out of court by most of their critics as wanting to put the hands of the clock back. Yet, many of those who glory in the astounding scientific and material progress of the 19th and 20th centuries have been driven by the relentless logic of events to concede the sheer instability and the grave dangers of such an order. Few sober thinkers would be rash enough to identify the technical and industrial advance of modern Europe with progress in its deeper and wider sense. For it is recognized to-day that a civilization may prosper externally and grow richer and more pompous while it is degenerating in social integrity and cultural vitality. A weakening of social integrity leads to the break-up of a social unit into rival classes, castes, sects, factions. There is conflict. The channel of life is clogged with corrupt tastes and corrupt morals. That way lies social catastrophe.

It is significant that a theory of progress was first clearly enunciated at a time when a spiritual ancestor of Woodrow Wilson was conducting his propaganda for the formation of a kind of League of Nations to ensure stable peace in Europe. It was at the end of the war of the Spanish Succession. This theory of progress as enunciated by Abbe de St. Pierre and elaborated by Turgot and Condorcet was deeply dyed in the Cartesian faith in reason. It was almost exclusively intellectual. Morals were regarded as the static element which had little direct bearing on human progress. The effect of religion was considered positively retrograde. In the historic religions these thinkers saw, and

with good reason, only a melancholy story of superstition, deception and cruelty, thus anticipating by two centuries the Soviet attitude to religion. It must be remembered that it was the century kindled to new life by the spirit of the Enlightenment. Newton had announced his discovery of the nature of the physical universe. Locke and Condillac had formulated their science of human nature. Rousseau, Turgot and Pierce had proclaimed their social theories. The apocalypse of reason prepared the atmosphere for the hope of a Millenium, when, as Condorcet said: "the human race, freed from all its fetters, withdrawn from the empire of chance as from that of the enemies of progress, would walk with firm and assured step in the way of truth, of virtue and of happiness."

In their bold attempt to refashion Society, the leaders of the French Revolution drew much of their inspiration from such ideas and such expectations as also from the thongs of Voltaire's satire. The Committee of Public Safety in France in 1794 issued a decree saying: "The transition of an oppressed nation to democracy is like the effort by which nature rose from nothingness to existence. You must entirely refashion a people whom you wish to make free, destroy its prejudices, alter its habits, limit its necessities, root up its vices, purify its desires." This ought to give a timely clue to Indian leaders struggling for the emancipation of India to-day. 'Refashion' in relation to the people of India will mean much more than it did to the leaders of the French Revolution. It will mean not only the eradication of the slavish submission to

tyranny but also of the snobbery bred by the caste system. And we must not forget that the infection of caste has found its way into Muslim and Christian circles also. The tradition of *subordination* must be replaced by a new habit of *co-ordination*. The caste-ridden Hindu subconsciously expects subordination from outcast Non-Hindus as he does from Hindu outcastes. Refashioning the Indian people will mean decommunalization, the dissolving of communal differences. But since communalism arises out of caste barriers, it is this irrational caste system which must first be abolished. Only then can India hope to be rid of the plague of communal bitterness. Refashioning the people of India will mean not only blasting inherited prejudices but also nurturing a strong desire for change.

The relation of Sociology to the other sciences was first worked out systematically by Auguste Comte. Up to his time he was the most representative of the new school of social science. He held that there is a regular evolution from the abstract and general to the concrete sciences, *e.g.*, from Mathematics to Astronomy and Physics and thus to Chemistry, Biology and Sociology. The final stage of scientific advancement is reached, according to this theory, in the development of Sociology, which makes it possible to make an organic construction out of the findings of comprehensive scholarship. This concrete and positive science of social units and of external nature in relation to these units would automatically supersede all the theological and metaphysical systems which had held the field in the absence of the scientific synthesis. Had Economics

and Psychology developed in Comte's time as they have to-day to the status of Science, with their experimental methods and their instruments of precision, he would assuredly have incorporated them as contributory sources. It is surprising that recent sociologists have neglected the important contributions of Economics and Psychology as much as they have.

True to his logic, Comte dismissed the whole of 18th century social philosophy along with the work of the revolutionary reformers. For him it was vitiated by metaphysical postulates. It was negative. It was destructive without being constructive. Curiously enough, this champion of measurable truths did not feel compelled by his own logic to abandon abstract ideas of humanity, civilization and progress. He did not find it necessary to focus his attention on a study of individuals and particular social units. On the contrary, Comte held with peculiar obstinacy that Humanity was the only reality and the individual human being was an abstraction. The law of progress, which was the ultimate fact of positive social science, determined all the visible changes in particular social units. This mystical Law of Progress could easily slip into the divine seat. Comte had foresight enough to insist that the function of science should be strictly limited to the service of humanity. He condemned the pursuit of knowledge as end in itself. Nature was to be interpreted not as inclusive of society but in terms of the social whole. This was a revolutionary inversion of the popular notion and would have had far-reaching effects had Comte hit upon the need for an economic interpretation of history.

After all, what is called the 'economic interpretation of history' is nothing more than a scientific attempt to work out a revolutionary Sociology in terms of the dialectical movement of matter and the conflict of opposites in society. Much of its unpopularity is due to its truthful habit of calling a spade a spade and not for ideological deficiencies. Unfortunately, much of its popularity depends not on the accuracy of its methods or the soundness of its theory but on the excitement of its practice. However, Comte's logic soon landed him in painful contradictions from which he sought relief in coddling his pet vagary of Humanity, much as an old man might coddle his pipe.

Comte boldly set his face against all theological and metaphysical conceptions. But he did not arrive at a materialistic theory. By a circuitous route he finally came to a religious system which represented the temporal order as subordinate to the spiritual power invested in the priests of Humanity and Progress. Science and action were both consecrated to the worship of a quasi-transcendent Great Being. This seemed to many of his contemporaries a pitiable anti-climax. The 19th century took no interest in such a solution. The rationalist and the liberal were equally disgusted with Comte's religious *volte face*. In its hour of unopposed advance, 19th century Science rejected his arbitrary limitations on the scientific method. Thus, a line of investigation which at the start bid fair to anticipate Marx ended as a philosophical fiasco.

European thought for the rest of the 19th century was influenced by Herbert Spencer's theory of evolution. Social progress for him was one instance of a cosmic

law. It was identical with the law of physical and biological evolution. The objective, and rather pessimistic views of Malthus influenced Spencer and Darwin. In fact Spencer's theory of the 'survival of the fittest' was the Malthusian law of the effect of population on food-supply fashioned into a biological principle. It was a blind non-ethical progress that Spencer envisaged. God and Conscience were alike left out in the cold. Crozier's impressive paraphrase of Spencer's evolutionary doctrine is worth quoting. "The progress of civilization," says he, "figures merely as one illustration more of a law that has necessitated alike the formation of solar systems from misty nebulae; of mountain and meadow and river from the original murky incandescent ball of earth; and of the bright and infinite variety of animal and vegetable forms from a few primitive and simple germs: to the great Law of Evolution whereby all things that exist must pass from the simple to the multiform, from the incoherent to the coherent, from the indefinite to the definite; the law which, while determining not only that the egg with its simple uniform composition shall gradually unfold itself into the chick with its complex, coherent and definite system of functions and organs; that the worm 'striving to be man shall mount through all the spires of forms'; determines also that human society itself, which starts from the condition in which each family wanders about alone and isolated, and each man is at once warrior, hunter, fisherman, tool-maker and builder, shall pass through the nomadic stage in which several families are united in a kind of chieftainship, where the king is at once priest and judge and the priest at once judge and king, and

eventuate to those complex states of modern civilization where labour is carried to its minutest subdivision and every function finds its appropriate social organ."

In such an outburst, inflated with all the enthusiasm of the convert, laying a tax on the reader's patience, Crozier proclaims Spencer's theory. It was a theory destined to bring more evil than good in its wake. It provoked idealists to fury. It animated militarists to new aggressions. The 18th century philosophers, even when they were materialists, placed man in a category above and apart from the rest of nature. They hypostatized human reason into a principle of world development. But Spencer's evolutionary theory set man back into nature and at the mercy of the same blind forces which rule the material world. Even if one is pessimistic enough to feel that man is at the mercy of Chance, one cannot rule out man's capacity to judge between right and wrong. The application of Spencer's doctrine to social life encourages individual and racial egotism and logically leads to Imperialism, Fascism and Nazism with their militaristic regimes. It excuses the subversion of those human principles of justice and liberty and peace which must be the foundation of any stable world-order in which progress can be ensured.

Spencer fought shy of these extreme conclusions. He sought refuge in a somewhat inconsistent theory which made the system of political centralization and military organization (corresponding to the brain and the nervous systems in the human organism) subordinate to industrialism which is said to be the social counterpart of the nutritive system. How cheerfully he would let the stomach govern the brain and have both

sign a pact against conscience! That is what has actually happened on a world-wide and devastating scale during the last thirty years. It has happened in the Kaiserean as well as the Hitlercan Wars. Twice on both sides appetite and skill have combined against justice, freedom and humanity. Both times both sides claimed that they were fighting to rid the world of the monstrous evil of exploitation and war. Did Spencer's theory of the survival of the fittest have any effect on the European passion for conquest and the exploitation of 'backward' people?

Huxley, in his turn, insistently emphasized the non-moral aspect of the evolutionary process. He even defended Calvinistic pessimism as more in keeping with scientific truth than the facile optimism which regards human nature as essentially good and the cosmic process as divinely progressive. The clash of forces, apparently governed by no rationality or purpose, inflicting upon individuals, social groups and entire nations wrongs unmerited and unmitigated misery, has from time immemorial driven sensitive poets and philosophers, historians and prophets to a pessimism which is more humanly heroic than all the callous faith of well-fed religious optimists. If Huxley did nothing more, he at least punctured the mischievous faith in an All-Wise Providence who supposedly gives to each individual and nation just so much of good and ill as He in His just wisdom thinks fit. If Huxley did nothing to relieve men's despair, he certainly aroused them from their religious stupor and faced them with the grim fact that progress demands the sustained courage and

determination to push on in spite of the unrelenting opposition of non-moral forces, despotic and dark.

By decoying man's attention to an All-Wise Providence, Religion has kept the human race in a fool's paradise. By giving man an optimistic faith in an omnipotent Divine Ally, Religion has kept the human race from developing its capacity to face odds and conquer without looking for aid to some mythical heavenly Power. Religion has made men world-forsakers but not world shakers. It has given men the courage to face martyrdom but not the courage to face facts. It has persecuted scientists. It has stoned prophets. By deception, called 'idealism' inaccurately, Religion has kept the world's great masses too blissfully weak to overthrow the tyranny of Mammon. Who can wallow in religious optimism under the dread shadows of a cruel Fate? Life, tasted to its dregs, makes pessimists of us all.

In our day, Bertrand Russell has given eloquent expression to the same defiant pessimism. If, for no other reason, for its inspirational value the passage deserves to be quoted in full. "Brief and powerless is man's life ;" says Lord Russell, "on him and all his race the slow sure doom falls pitiless and dark. Blind to good and evil, reckless of destruction, omnipotent matter rolls on its relentless way ; for man, condemned to-day to lose his dearest, to-morrow himself to pass through the gates of darkness, it remains only to cherish ere yet the blow falls, the lofty thoughts that ennoble his little day ; disclaiming the coward terrors of the slave of Fate, to worship at the shrine his own hands have built ; undismayed by the empire of chance, to

preserve a mind free from the wanton tyranny that rules his outward life ; proudly defiant of the irresistible forces that tolerate for a moment his condemnation, to sustain alone a weary but unyielding Atlas, the world that his own ideals have fashioned despite the trampling march of unconscious power.''

Such Promethean courage is the only ally, the one mainstay of the progressive elements in society which wish to solve the problems arising out of environmental conditions at any point in history. It may lack the glitter of religious faith. But it gives the capacity to work towards greater social efficiency knowing that failure may lurk at any corner. Prof. Macmurray suggests with good reason that before society can produce science there must be a socially effective group of people who have abandoned the slavish outlook that seeks its canons of rightness in the authority of the past, and have adopted instead a self-reliant attitude of making the future better than the past. Man's story on this planet proves nothing if it does not prove that an increasing mastery of material resources is a primary necessity for security, prosperity and progress. This demands a scientific knowledge of the material world on which techniques of control can be based. But the development of science inevitably brings about radical changes in social habits and at the same time offers tremendous advantages to those who own the financial means of utilizing scientific techniques for the exploitation of material resources.

Thus on the one hand Religion, clinging to custom and tradition, opposes Science and on the other hand Capitalism opposes those who would apply scientific

techniques to the transformation of social practice. Science produces an alliance between Religion and Capitalism and a divorce between the 'haves' and the 'have-nots.' Capitalism hands over the 'have-nots' to Religion to be kept conveniently fettered by custom and tradition, the caste system and communalism, religious hopes and moral ideals. While Religion gives its divine support to the 'haves' to exploit nature and labour with the aid of Science.

A sociological study of Religion, whether in India or Europe, will bring to light many instances of the use of the magic of religion to keep the dispossessed masses from revolt ; to protect the authority of the rich and powerful ; and to oppose any progress that threatens the *status quo*. Why else does Religion preach charity instead of justice, meekness instead of equality, salvation from sin instead of all-round emancipation ? Telling its followers to seek the protection of God, it turns to Caesar for protection. Financiers are always Caesar's friends. Religion must keep in their good books also. Science provides financiers with factories for the exploitation of the masses and Religion keeps the masses drugged with divine opium while they are being bled to death. The rich grow more powerful. The poor become weaker. Society advances in corruption. Rival financiers in different countries want to win in the desperate race for foreign markets. Caesar must protect the interests of his friends. States come into conflict. The world finds itself plunged into war. Religion stands by as a recruiting officer. That is why Religion has failed to influence social ethics. -

The conflict between the urge for progress and the acquisitive instinct, between the desire to gain mastery over the material world and the fear that an equitable distribution of the benefits of science will revolutionize society, has produced worldwide want in the midst of plenty, and international savagery in the midst of civilization, and has brought Europe, robed in the arrogance of power, to the verge of collapse. And until this conflict is resolved European progress will be like a runaway engine heading for disaster. With thunder and lightning it may flaunt for a day its staggering scientific achievements and an insolent sense of superiority which grows out of these achievements. But like thunder and lightning it will come to nought after it has drenched the earth in blood.

What can Sociology do to help resolve this conflict between an insane acquisitive passion and the human urge for progress? For some two score years or so Sociology has frittered away its time in studying social diseases and not social health and the factors conducive to it. It has concentrated on crime, unemployment, prostitution, prison-reform and the like. This approach has certainly done some good. It has enabled a few people to see that social conditions are largely responsible for social diseases. But it has not enabled them to understand the essentials of social hygiene. It has done nothing positive to show what the Norm of social efficiency should be, or how this Norm may be made effective in social adjustments. Instead of being the science of social efficiency, Sociology has allowed itself to become a course in social pathology. It has looked to Religion to furnish the Norm. Religion has looked

to Caesar. Caesar has looked to his supporters. They have looked to their pockets. Gestures have been made. But things remain much as they were. Perhaps, if Sociology had championed the Norm it would have fallen foul of the powers-that-be. Any bold professors who helped to further the revolutionary function of Sociology would have lost their *sinecures*. It is safe enough to point out isolated remedies for isolated social maladies. Even the beneficiaries of Capitalism and Imperialism will gladly give large donations to finance such remedial projects. It is a slave to their conscience. It allows publicity. But if Sociology is the science of social efficiency it cannot fulfil its function without showing that social efficiency demands an equitable distribution of wealth and equal opportunities for every individual and group.

Sociology should help us to understand the characteristic conditions which determine relative social behaviour and how those conditions may be altered by progressive social action. The progress of India must depend on the ability, courage and persistence with which we work to alter those conditions which are responsible for unprogressive and at times deleterious social behaviour. While we must use scientific techniques to the full, it must be done for human not commercial ends. While we must adopt the radical outlook of making the future better than the past, we must conserve those values of our national culture which can be re-interpreted in the context of changed modern needs. We need an Indian Sociology which is not afraid to form a defensive and offensive alliance with Economics, using the findings as well as

some of the methods of radical economists. It may conserve whatever it finds of value for modern needs in Kautilya's *Arthasastra*. It may adapt Gandhian principles where these principles lend themselves to a progressive theory of social adjustment. It may find many useful pointers in the writings of Radha Kamal Mukerjee or Benoy Kumar Sarkar or Dujati Prasad Mukerjee. It may find equally fruitful suggestions from Russian, British or American thinkers. With scrupulous impartiality it should throw light on the educational, cultural, communal, industrial and rural problems. It should be Indian inasmuch as it deals realistically with the modern Indian situation. It should be Sociology inasmuch as it elucidates the principles of efficient, progressive and wholesome social living. It should be a mirror of revelation, offering a sociological criticism of the past and the present whereby India will be able to steer a more successful course in decades to come.

It should be the high function of Indian Sociology to offer the world the technique for mastering the Machine for common human ends, for making human and social life fuller, freer and happier. It should be the high function of Indian Sociology to show the world a way out of the horrors of periodic wars. It should be the high function of Indian Sociology to offer the world a Socialism which ensures economic and social equality without the leonine violence of communistic methods, which ensures unity without the regimentation of uniformity, which ensures internationalism without the destruction of the beautiful and noble in national cultures.

Sociology must tend to become a revolutionary theory. Then it will fulfil its destiny of guiding social units towards that real progress which sometimes will mean turning the socio-economic order upside down. It may have to be the John the Baptizer to the Herod of Imperialism and Fascism. It may have to be the Krishna to the Kamsa of caste. At every stage of development it will revolutionize social ethics. It will infuse new-life into social practice. It will animate optimists and pessimists to work with the zeal of the revolutionary and arouse the national as well as the international will-to-progress. It will help in creating the conditions which can furnish the required momentum. It will carry the ensign of Progress into the heart of the enemy camp.

CHAPTER III

Religious Frauds

I

NOT long ago to tickle an Indian's vanity one had just to say: "Indians are incorrigibly religious!" The younger generation, happily, is too worldly-wise to be moved by such compliments. Many of them are frankly disgusted with hackneyed phrases such as "materialistic West" and "spiritual East". Some are very sceptical of the social value of religion. Dr. Nicol Macnicol observes: "A complete abandonment of all religion, a vague but humanitarian agnosticism, a religion of patriotism, a Hinduism moralized and brought up to date: these appear to be some of the paths in the dark wood that the educated classes in India are pursuing." Dr. Macnicol was too ardent a Missionary to recognize that the 'dark wood' in which he saw India wandering was planted by Religion, the latest additions being made by Christianity. Religion has thrown the Indian mind into confusion. It has set spiritual values on a pedestal. It has treated material values as contemptible. It has made Indians renounce the world for higher things. Instead of holding bandits at bay, we have been impelled by our religious ideals to read out welcome addresses to them and return to our enjoyment of *bhakti*. It is said that Gibraltar was taken by the British when the Spaniards were at High Mass. Is Religion always a liability?

In the early stages of man's evolution Religion may have indirectly helped his progress. It offered him magic whereby he felt he could control the forces of nature. It gave him poetry. It provided Music. It furnished art. It produced dramatic representations. To his unspoilt mind Religion seemed to have an explanation for everything, a remedy for every ill, a means of combating every foe. To-day, the myths and legends of Religion are not taken as explaining anything but as interesting specimens of the kindergarten of the race. To-day, we go to Science for mastery over the forces of nature. We go to armament factories for the means of combating our foes. We go to art galleries, opera houses, theatres and to books to satisfy our esthetic sense. We consult trained doctors of medicine or sociology or economics to find remedies for our ills. To-day, Religion itself is studied scientifically. We know, for instance, the earliest form of religion pictured a deity that was more or less like a huge, capricious giant. Next, men imagined that all things around them, mountains, rivers, animals and trees, had soul like themselves. This animism gave rise to the worship of Nature, ghosts and animals. By another route men came upon magic. All forms of animistic religion came under the spell of magic. Out of these, in the course of human advance, the various polytheisms were evolved. Some one god was recognized as the generalissimo of the gods. With the development of man's ethical consciousness this chief of the gods came to be regarded more and more as the moral governor of the world. Then arose the worship of one God.

Strangely enough, Religion has neither a common platform nor a common appeal. Even critical scholars differ widely in their estimates. While Kant declares: "Religion is the recognition of all duties as divine commands," Schleiermacher says: "The essence of religion is the feeling of absolute dependence." While Max Muller observes: "Religion is a mental faculty or disposition, which independent of, nay in spite of, sense and reason, enables man to apprehend the Infinite under different names and under varying guises" Allen Menzies affirms: "Religion is the worship of higher powers from the sense of need." While Albert Reville says: "Religion rests above all upon the need of man to realize an harmonious synthesis between his own destiny and the opposing influences he meets in the world," E. S. Ames asserts: "Religion is the consciousness of the highest social values." One is left to wonder why, being all these things, Religion has such a poor record to show for itself, why its bankruptcy has become apparent. Radhakrishnan throws oil on the troubled waters of this controversy by saying: "All forms of religion which have appeared on earth *assume* the fundamental need of the human heart. Man longs for a power above him on which he can depend. One that is greater than himself whom he can worship." What do the religions themselves say ?

In the Far East, Shintoism (660 B. C.) teaches that the Japanese are the chosen people of God and the presence of God is especially manifested in the Emperor of Japan. It enjoins a self-sacrificing reverence for the State, a desire for purity and cleanliness, and a devotion to the beautiful. In China, Taoism (604 B. C.)

emphasizes the intimate connection of each human being with the Supreme Being ; the necessity of humbly following the divine "Way" and of returning good for evil. Confucianism (551 B. C.) holds that human nature is fundamentally good because divinely implanted ; that the Golden Rule is the proper rule for conduct ; that God is the moral supervisor of the world ; and propriety of conduct is all that matters.

In India, Hinduism (2000 B. C.) teaches that one, supreme, spiritual Reality pervades all phenomena ; that through devotion, knowledge or actions the individual can achieve union with the divine ; that the law of *karma* determines each individual's successive rebirths and conditions of life ; and that the caste-basis for society is divinely instituted. Jainism (599 B. C.) insists on the subordination of all material things for the sake of spiritual values ; on non-injury to all living things ; and on loyalty to the religious ideal as taught by Mahavira who is venerated as a divine ambassador. Buddhism (560 B. C.) enjoins rigorous discipline of body and mind as the way of salvation, requiring renunciation of desire, and the recognition of the moral law and the equality of all men. Sikhism (1469 A. D.) emphasizes the sovereignty of the supremely Adorable One ; the need for absolute submission to God ; the importance of repeating prescribed prayers ; devotion to the founder, Guru Nanak, as God's prophet ; and the essential brotherhood of all men.

In Asia Minor, Zoroastrianism (660 B. C.) insists on the friendliness of a personal, ethical Deity, Ahur Mazda, and on the need to fight on his side against the Evil One, Ahriman ; on personal choice and responsibility ;

on activity rather than asceticism ; on the social value of a religious life ; and on the final triumph of Ahur Mazda over Ahriman. Judaism (1500 B. C.) proclaims the moral government of the world by the one supreme and holy God who has made the Jews his chosen people ; the need for right relations between man and man as the means of establishing right relations between man and God ; the bright hope of a better future ; and the necessity for a social expression of religious ideals. It is interesting to recall that Isaiah, the outstanding Hebrew prophet refers to Cyrus, the Zoroastrian King, as "God's chosen one" and "God's shepherd." Christianity (4 A. D.) teaches that the world is governed by a loving holy Father-God for whom every human being is equally dear, who desires that every individual be saved by believing in Jesus Christ, that brotherhood should prevail on earth and ultimately the Kingdom of God should become the fulfilment of all human hopes and aspirations. Islam (570 A. D.) lays stress on the sovereignty of an omnipotent yet merciful God who loves those who obey his commands, do good, lead a life of prayer, follow the Prophet, Mohammad, and fight for the divine Cause ; on the brotherhood of the Faithful ; and on the last Judgment.

Standing like a pigmy amid the huge mountains and immeasurable spaces, the beauty and splendour, the silence and mystery, the cruelty and horror of natural phenomena, hurled back by the forces of evil, awed by the shadow of death, man instinctively reaches out for communion with a beneficent supreme Being. Religion assumes this need, and in diverse thought-forms and in various languages, proclaims such a deity.

He is represented as being all-powerful, able to protect the weak and destroy evil. He is all-knowing and can be trusted to do the right thing for all his people. He is present everywhere and sees everything. The world is under his moral governance and hence there is nothing to fear. Human life cannot be meaningless nor evil rampant for ever. Thus, Religion gives man the secret of optimism. This secret is the God-idea in some form. Men eagerly believe in the divine governance of the world and putting implicit trust in a sovereign deity who loves justice and hates injustice, go to work with high hopes. With the strength and confidence born of this faith, men toil and suffer, watch and pray and toil, fight and die.

Is this optimistic faith justified? Or do facts prove that the religious faith is a drug to deaden pain, a drug which in its after-effects must prove harmful to the intellectual muscles and the moral fibre? Do facts support the large claims that Religion makes? If the world is governed by God, the supremely Moral Being, we should be able to find evidence in the world of this divine moral governance. If we are to believe that Religion is a progressive force we can do so only if it has helped to bring peace and prosperity on earth, if it has helped to implement justice and eradicate injustice, if it has vindicated its mighty claims. What is the evidence that we find?

The international scene is heart-rending. Wanton destruction of human life and the cherished work of men's hands, wanton assaults on defenceless peoples, wanton plunder of other people's lands have left a hideous grin of mockery on the face of the world

which says: "This is the divine governance of the world!" History is not only a record of the forces that shape civilization but also of the forces that destroy it. It is a sad story of the lust for power, wealth and domination running amuck and spreading foul diseases, grievous poverty, mental anguish and moral death across vast continents. History is a tragic drama of divine defeat. Might is right. It seems rank stupidity to ignore the fact. Those who can kill best dominate the world. Those who are weak find solace in Religion. Not reason but armaments dictate peace treaties. Not justice but greed makes laws. Human life has no value. It is made as shockingly cheap as the life of flies. Tens of millions of men are killed or maimed for life or turned insane and countless other millions are flung into the jaws of hell so that the villainy of rulers may be given an idealistic colour-wash. Actually in the War of 1914-18, 23 millions were killed, 23 millions were wounded or missing, 9 million children became orphans and 10 million men and women became homeless refugees. In the name of God or Religion, Freedom or Democracy the law of the jungle is made the supreme law governing nations. Religion, when it is implicated gives a wink of silent approval. In fact, it has been the standard-bearer of Imperialism since empire-hunters began their hunt. Not for a decade or a generation but for centuries upon centuries has armed might laid waste fertile lands, crushed the manhood of peace-loving peoples, robbed, enslaved and tyrannized. A handful of politicians have the power to sweep the world into chaos. How has Religion endeavoured to avert such calamities?

The Kaiserean War is computed to have cost the world about 340 billion dollars, an amount which could have provided every village of every country with a school, a hospital and a library. Why did Religion allow such a colossal abuse of 340 billion dollars? Countries voluntarily at war suffered intolerably for four years and reaped a harvest of widows and orphans, bitterness and blighted hopes. Subject countries were dragged through the scorching flames and thrown aside when the War was over. India contributed £120 million in money and 1,338,600 men, that is, 178,000 more than the total man-power contributed by Canada, South Africa, Australia and New Zealand put together. The other colonies were given Dominion Status. India got as her reward, not the Dominion Status that Britain had promised in her hour of peril, but the burning shame and sorrow of Jallianwallah Bagh. What did Religion do in the matter? The omnipresent deity must be enjoying a divine version of Rip Van Winkle's long sleep, divinely oblivious to the petty happenings of our little world.

The world was not at peace after the Treaty of Versailles. Bloodshed and insecurity continued in Russia. Then Japan seized Manchuria. Italy grabbed Abyssinia. Franco plunged Spain into Civil War. Before long, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Norway, Greece, the Little Entente, the Phillipines, Malaya, the East Indies, Burma and several other innocent countries suffered the horrors of War just because the great powers were at each others' throats. Have these thirty years been years of progress? Has Religion done its

part to make them productive of good-will, love, and a sense of brotherhood ?

II

If this oppressing situation presents any problems to Religion, they are all ruled out. "For," says Religion, "in his own good time the good God will make everything right." With this rubber-stamp religious censorship 'blacks-out' every ethical, metaphysical, and logical problem. It may be true that in the perspective of eternity many centuries are as a day. It may be true that the eternal God can see things only under the aspect of eternity. Perhaps those nations which are allowed to lord it over others may also be able to see things as God sees them. But the less pugnacious and militarily weaker nations of the earth, doomed to an eternity of suffering here and now, may well consider the eternity hereafter as hypothetical as the eternal God. What they know by sad and unforgettable experience is that the unrighteous greed and villainously clever methods of a handful of men in Britain or Germany or Japan have robbed them of their rightful inheritance ; that constant subjection to foreign rule has drained them of moral vitality ; and the law of the jungle has sentenced them to unending poverty and soul-shattering bondage. They can only conclude that Religion has used the worst kind of bluff on them, and that either the loving Father-God is always on the side of his lusty plundering sons or that he is bombed out of his Heaven and taken to a Red Cross hospital to convalesce.

Reason declares that when centuries of slavery have sapped the moral fibre of a people they are as good as dead. When centuries of repression have strangled all

initiative there is no hope for a nation. When centuries of foreign domination and repeated wars have brought about intellectual and cultural stagnation there is only an eternity of decay to await. Certainly Religion has prepared the ground for the final handing over of the world to gangsters. It may have taken forty or more centuries but things are moving faster now. Gangsterism is no longer naked. It parades in dinner-jackets. It claims divine guidance. It wears the most pious of masks.

The advancement of Science has put new and deadly weapons into the hands of this international gangsterism. Western countries have made rapid progress in Science. By a conspiracy of fortuitous circumstances some Western countries have acquired the scientific techniques of exploitation and self-justification. They are the 'Great Powers.' They produce very little of the raw material they need. But they have the Science and can grab the raw material. And they control the markets of the world. Circumstances beyond their control have landed militarily weak nations in the plight of blood-consuming servitude. It is one of the bitter jests of Fate that villains should be crowned rulers of the earth and saints be tortured on the rack. The ordinances of Satan seem to have annulled the laws of God. From its stronghold Religion comes forth in all the solemnity of official vestments merely to say "Amen!"

Is the social scene more encouraging? Has Religion succeeded in stirring the social conscience of the world or of any race or nation with its God-ideal? To be sure, single men by their effort and sacrifice have called

attention to iniquitous social phenomena. Buddha and Jesus, Damien and Wilberforce, Marx and Gandhi have underscored social evils with their blood. But have social units anywhere cleansed their Augean stables? If Religion is the channel through which God operates, as the religiocracy claims, all the world's religions must be badly clogged. For he has not operated through any of them yet. Hinduism or Buddhism, Christianity or Islam, Confucianism or Zoroastrianism, none of them has succeeded in bringing the irresistible influence of a just and loving God to banish the tyranny of plutocrats, the snobbery of the 'high-born' and the duplicity of those who by virtue of favourable accidents have climbed into seats of authority and prestige. Perhaps, Switzerland and modern Palestine are the two tracts on the earth's surface where equality and comradeship are being established, and that not by religious but secular influences. Unfortunately, in Soviet Russia the equalizing process took such a violent form that the proletariat has become the proletariat of the like-minded. Those who differ are removed. Inequalities have thus taken another form. Whereas, in every other part of the world the immense labouring mass of the population makes up the disinherited class. It is their's to do the hardest, meanest and most necessary work and be recompensed with whippings, starvation, squalor and misery. Their protests are silenced by machine-guns. Their agony is curtailed by premature death. Who is the God of the world's unprivileged billions, whose cries of anguish are drowned in the mingled laughter of their tormentors and the benedictions of Religion?

In spite of the exalted religious ideals of non-violence (*ahimsa*) and a life of devotion, renunciation and charity taught for over four thousand years by Hinduism, vast millions of 'untouchables' in India suffer inhuman violence at the hands of Hindus. Religion decrees that they be treated as dogs, made to live in nauseating hovels, kept away from the temples and common wells, from knowledge and happiness and learn that God and Religion are their worst enemies. In spite of all the resounding ideals of justice, liberty and brotherhood preached by Christianity over every continent for two thousand years two-thirds of the Christian population of the world belongs to the dispossessed class. Religion decrees that they be kept in hell here so that they may inherit heaven hereafter and have a better relish for heavenly things ; that they be divested of rights and moral stamina so that they may meekly carry out the behests of exploiters whom the loving Father-God has been pleased to place in authority. In spite of the sturdy ideals of righteousness, equality and obedience to the Divine will proclaimed by Islam for fifteen hundred years the Muslim Nawab proves as heartless a despot as any other ; the Muslim masses suffer the same stigma of caste and class that other masses suffer ; the Muslim League preaches unrighteous hate and a doctrine of vicious disruption with impunity. Possibly, *Kismet* has decreed that the large majority of Muslims be doomed to poverty, insecurity and cultural and intellectual decay so that they might desperately grab what perverted compensations they can for stunted, squalid lives.

To which God should women appeal for redress of

immemorial wrongs? Is it a sample of the divine justice that Religion makes eloquent reference that countless women in most parts of the world are subjected to horrid sex-slavery, condemned to drudgery, darkness and despair? Their weakness is exploited. Their comeliness is turned into a marketable commodity. Their talents are cramped. Their personality is crushed. When they are given legal freedom and equality they are obliged to use meretricious arts to win and retain male favour. Where divorces are easy they become the playthings of philanderers. Betrayed by callous men and hounded by social snobbery thousands of women are compelled to go on the streets for a living. They must choose either to be exploited in unprotected freedom or enslaved in safe seclusion. Remarkably enough, every religion, boasting of divine inspiration, lends support to the unjust subjection of women. The mother of the race must be the race's bond-servant. This is another of the terrible ironies that the divine governance of the world allows.

The champions of Religion maintain that social evils, economic maladjustments and international injustice are the result of man's sinful nature. God is not responsible for the misery inflicted on the world by the wickedness of men. God wants humanity to be happy, to live the abundant life and strive to bring God's kingdom on earth. He has given precepts to live by. He is willing to inspire and strengthen those who approach him. If men persist in breaking God's laws they must suffer the punishment. It would be a plausible argument if it did not abrogate the divine attributes, the omnipotent love and the omniscient

Fatherhood of God, and reduce him to the stature of a constitutional monarch who is bound to give his assent to anything passed by his wily ministers. He is powerless. The pomp of a royal puppet conceals his futility. His existence makes no difference in the affairs of men and of nations save to add stateliness to ceremonious occasions. Caught in the trap of his own creation God seems to be shorn of his power and like Samson sits blinded and manacled between the huge pillars of Religion that support the house of injustice and crime. The 'divine governance of the world' becomes a deceptive phrase. The qualities attributed to God bear no correspondence to facts.

Religious theory has tried to come out of this dilemma by inventing a doctrine of incarnation. It is meant to display God's doings in a human setting. It declares that God 'descends' or takes human form to avenge the wrongs of the righteous or to set an example of the godly life. But the doctrine of incarnation fails to satisfy because it is vitiated by its national and even racial bias; because it is restricted by the particular social milieu in which the incarnation lives and acts; and because the coming of the incarnation makes no difference in reducing human misery or enlarging social justice or establishing an era of international peace and progress. New cults spring up. New forms of worship come into vogue. New rivalries are created. New causes for hatred and conflict are sown. Has the advent of any incarnation released the spiritual dynamic or the divine energy needed to transform social, economic and political evils which continue to demoralize, depersonalize and dehumanize

the vast majority of mankind ? History answers "No : " And every continent reverberates the negative answer. The prophets and reformers, the revolutionaries and liberationists flash across our horizon, casting a momentary effulgence, only to leave behind an intenser darkness. The world relapses into savagery so often that savagery seems to be the end of civilization. Religion itself grows feebler after each relapse.

III

Feebly, indeed, do religious advocates point out that poverty, unemployment, crime, pauperism, prostitution and the like are social maladies which must be treated by Sociology not Religion. It is the business of Sociology to prescribe remedies for social diseases. Religion is concerned with the diseases of the soul. It is the means whereby God communicates with the individual and the individual communes with God and obtains his spiritual cure and nourishment. Thus, the individual is enabled to approximate the perfect life. Indeed, but can human life be a life in a vacuum ? Everywhere and always human life is social. If Religion transmits the perfecting influence of God to the individual it would through individuals inevitably affect social, national and international life towards fuller happiness and progress. One could then believe that Religion was actually in touch with a living God, the active Norm of the perfect life. As it is, Religion proves to be a telephone connection between the individual and Nowhere. He calls and calls, earnestly and entreatingly, but there is no answer from the God-end. Is God the eternal Silence, the infinite Cipher ?

Nevertheless, let us consider the life of the individual. Do we find it in the hands of a rational, righteous, loving Father-God or at the mercy of a despotic Fate? In the presence of the staggering immensities of astronomical space and geological time human life seems like a tiny glow-worm flickering uncertainly for a moment to be quenched the next instant. To what end is all the ado that Religion makes? Can it control one single accident of the many that together make sport of human life? The accident of birth in a particular country, social group and family helps or hinders the individual's future career. The right sort of patronage at the right moment helps and its absence hinders his success. He may start life with unusually fine talents and high hopes, implicit faith and robust determination. The word "impossible" may not be found in his lexicon. Full of vigour, vigorous ideals and idealistic ambitions he may fall to work to do little things greatly and be ready to do great things well. But accidents impede his course. Lack of opportunity, the immoral requirements of the social order, financial complications prove obstacles beyond his control. Altogether irrational circumstances frustrate his plans. All his strenuous efforts end in smoke, the smoke that marks the funeral pyre of his ideals and aspirations. Favourable accidents may put a water-carrier on a throne. Unfavourable accidents may throw a king into prison. Accidents may raise a lunatic into a national dictator. Accidents may fling a genius on the scrap-heap. Accidents shape human destinies. It is Chance that writes "Failure" or "Success" across the pages of human life. Caught in

the whirling current of irrational circumstances like the jetsam on a stormy sea, men and women are swept along, some to high places, others to oblivion, some to full-orbed satisfaction, others to starved suicide.

It may be objected that such an argument is like expecting an electric dynamo to work a steam engine. God, the Holy One, religiocrats assert, is not concerned with the material conditions of life. The power of his holiness affects the spiritual climate in which men live. But if this is so, why, in the name of common sense, did God give men the physical, emotional and intellectual in addition to the spiritual nature, knowing as the Omniscient must have known, that three-fourths of human personality would be left under the dominance of blind mechanical forces or chance or accident? Why does Religion enjoin man to call unto God in the hour of need, confident of succour and help? If God was interested only in the spiritual aspect of human nature, why did he not make man an entirely spiritual being? There would have been some rationality in that. Any ideal has the emotive power to affect the spiritual nature of man. It does not need a divine Being to do that. Many an ideal, forged on the anvil of human thought, has furnished the spiritual momentum for progress. Is God just such a man-made ideal?

As a creative artist makes something, a painting, a poem, a statue or a musical composition, to embody his ideal of perfection and provide a refuge for his soul from the hideous imperfections and cruel contradictions of everyday life, so the religious genius creates a picture of God, the ideal of love,

goodness, power and self-sufficiency. But the need for a God-ideal does not endow it with objective reality any more than the need for *houris* in Paradise gives that kind of Paradise real existence. Jesus applied a fundamental test when he said : "By your fruits you are known." If finite man, frail and impotent as the dust out of which he is fashioned, is to be tested by this formula, surely it should be far more appropriate to apply it to the Almighty. A man is what he does. God must be what he does. Life is action. Purposive activity is the only proof of the rational being. The test of the deed shatters one's belief in a God-governed world. If the Supernatural does not mould the natural according to a rational design, what proof is there for its existence ? When a dozen species of Evil flourish universally and play havoc at will, what proof is there that a supremely good and righteous God exists ?

It is true that many of the existing religions of the world have come up against the problem of evil and suffering. But in their treatment of it they have acknowledged their own bankruptcy. Hinduism denies the real existence of evil. It is all a trick of *maya*. If there is suffering involved, then, the theory of *Karma* points to one's sins of some previous birth as the cause. It must need a billion divine accountants to keep a correct record of each individual's sins of each of the crores of births and exact the penalty in each succeeding rebirth. And, if this is so, one may dispense with the need for a moral deity and bravely prepare to pay Shylock his pound of flesh. Islam says that evil is relatively unreal because arbitrary. Everything is predestined. One cannot alter one jot of one's *kismet*.

But by submission to the divine will everything can be conquered. If it is all a matter of *kismet* then let humanity suffer without whimpering and without entreaty, without hope of justice and without fear of loneliness. Zoroastrianism recognizes that half of all existence is evil because an active dualism is inherent in the very nature of things. By good thoughts, words and deeds the individual should co-operate with the good God and fight against the Devil. But, unfortunately, the Devil seems to be victorious on all fronts and like the victorious everywhere wreaks his vengeance on those against him.

Buddhism and Christianity present striking contrasts. Buddhism says to be is to be miserable. Christianity says to be is to be blessed. Buddhism holds that evil and suffering are the consequences of insatiable desire, and, so, desire should be annihilated if the individual wishes to escape from the trap of individuality and activity and rebirth. Christianity holds that the fundamental evil is the selfish use of God-given free-will and any violation of human personality, and, so, by loving service the individual should co-operate with the loving Father-God to master evil and establish the happy Kingdom of God. Buddhism is pessimistic. Christianity is optimistic. Buddhism is the creed of world-forsakers. Christianity is the creed of world-conquerors. Buddhism prescribes service without desire for reward. Christianity prescribes service with the desire for converts. Buddhism failed in India. Christianity failed in Europe.

Religion has proved a convenient device, a sort of motor-cycle with a side-car. The religiocrat can ride

past the grim problem of evil and suffering and take his conscience along in the side-car. But sometimes the motor-cycle gets wrecked by accident when a reckless individual rushes down a valley, perhaps, in search of flood-sufferers. He must then be a pedestrian and being a pedestrian he can be a comrade to fellow-victims of the time-honoured hoax. Two such pedestrians, Voltaire and Rousseau, did more for the advancement of France than all the bishops and priests put together. Lord Shaftsbury complained that in all his strenuous work of reform he got more sympathy and help from the medical than the divine profession.

Indeed, Religion and progress seem to be at daggers drawn. Asia, the cradle of the world's living religions, has not been the cradle of progress. Europe made rapid advance when it made Religion a political weapon. When Turkey turned her face away from religious conservatism she succeeded in forging ahead. When Russia removed the dead hand of Religion from her head she astonished the world by her speedy regeneration, and it is to Communism that the credit is due. India has been held back for centuries by religious traditionalism, and once great and progressive, is to-day among the backward countries of the world. Religion may be a useful preservative of certain culture-values. But what it preserves is often unprogressive. From this it cannot be argued, as Christopher Dawson does, that "A society which has lost its religion becomes sooner or later a society which has lost its culture." So long as a society can produce men and women whose creative genius revitalizes

culture-values by reinterpretation, replacing what must be replaced, revaluating what must be revalued, there is no fear of its losing its culture. A vital cultural system continually renews itself, throwing away waste products, adapting itself to changed conditions. In 2043 A. D. it will not be the same as it was in 2043 B. C. But that only shows it is alive and life-giving.

To assume a directive role in society Religion sets itself up as transmitter of God's Word. To gain greater control over social practice it plays on the fears and superstitions of the illiterate masses. In fact, Religion moulds social legislation and claims to derive its authority from God. Who shall question such high authority? Who shall examine religio-social sanctions? Religion pronounces the benediction over the new-born child. It initiates the youth into the social unit. It officiates at the wedding ceremony. It is always at hand to pull a man's chestnuts out of the fire (never a woman's!). It consoles the dying with bright hopes of an after-life. It prescribes a decent way of disposing off the dead body. Can anything prove such an effective instrument of control? The guardians of the social order, who profit most from the *status quo*, are not slow in recognizing the necessity of bringing Religion under the influence of their golden wand. So the Moneyocracy controls the Religocracy and together they man and control their governments. Religion constructs a barricade of scriptural texts and taboos. Entrenched behind this sacred and unassailable barricade the guardians of the social system exploit the masses with safety. Through governmental intervention they resist any change that threatens their vested

interests. The Religiocracy is easily enlisted in any campaign against progress. Sometimes, as in Ireland and India, inter-religious conflicts can be excited to such a pitch that they threaten national disruption.

Soviet Russia has dealt wisely with Religion. In the Museum of Religions in Moscow one reviews in concrete form the sad story of Religion, how it has exploited the ignorant, how it has fought against progress, how it has sold itself to the *bourgeoisie* and sanctioned the betrayal of its own ideals, how it has encouraged racial hatred and class-snobbery. As a private matter between the individual and his deity Religion cannot do much harm. For some time to come, the tender-minded, especially if they are in distress, may want to hug the God-idea as a woman does her hot-water-bag for comfort. Let them have the solace of their superstitions. Once Religion is banned by the State it ceases to be a sinister instrument of social and political control. Public religious activity of all kinds, worship, processions, demonstrations, preaching, expressions from the platform or the press, should be banned. This is enough to divest Religion of its fantastic power and weaken the reactionary forces that mainly depend on the co-operation of the Religiocracy. Those who make Religion their trade and extol the God-idea for larger and quicker sales will have to find a more productive field of labour. Those who grow fat smoking their *hookas*, while thousands risk their lives and toil, and then yawn lazily and point to God as the giver of all their bounty will pay heavily for their indolence. There will probably be less hypocrisy in all human relationships.

Then progressive measures can be taken. They will be understood by the people who to-day are drugged by Religion. Then economic justice can be achieved, and with it, social equality and brotherhood talked about by Religion will be brought about by secular forces. With the emergence of a just and equalitarian social system, with scientific and industrial advance, man will acquire greater control of those forces which determine his destiny. No longer tortured by the tyranny of Chance, he will work with clearer vision and healthier zeal to fashion a cleaner world for himself and his fellowmen. In the name of God men have been taught to exploit, hate and kill. In the name of Man let them learn to share, love and help live, remembering that all mortals, whatever their colour, birth or occupation, are victims of the divine Jest. Carrying the dart of disappointment in his own heart, having watched his own beloved taken away by death, the least a man can do is to remember that others are stricken too and deserve kindness and sympathy. Born in solitary discomfort to aspire, struggle and suffer alone and then to die in the lonely solitude of his own self, man's lasting compensation must be the friendship of those whom his indomitable courage inspires to keep their brave smile unquenched though their last hope has perished and all their desperate efforts have been in vain. Religion fosters a sense of pathetic dependence that cuts the very nerve of self-reliance, making man a helpless victim who must run for solace and help to a personified Hypothesis, whereas man must be undaunted in playing a losing game with calm dignity and good grace, still

labouring for the common good, unyielding though undecieved. Man must be his own divinity since it is to himself that he must look for the strength to conquer defeat and the good humour to keep his heart from breaking, knowing that his loneliness is not mitigated by the gigantic ghost of abstract righteousness or the false assurance of an unavailing deity.

If progress is to be made the mind of the nation must be emancipated from religious fear and traditionalism. It must be rid of the poison of religious parasitism. It must be fed on healthy truth not diseased orthodoxy. Not the slaves of the gods but Promethean super-men will achieve India's progress, liberty and happiness.

CHAPTER IV

Cultural Interaction

VALMIKI must have been an unschooled anthropologist. His poetic insight anticipated Darwin's scientific theory by more than fifteen centuries. His depiction of Hanuman furnishes an excellent illustration of Darwin's "missing link." The *Vanar sena* suggests an army of pigmies and Ravana and his host suggest savage cannibals. Rama and Laxman provide the contrast between the primitive and the civilized. But by making the success of Rama, the perfect hero, depend on the co-operation of Hanuman, Angad, Sugriva and the Pigmy Army, Valmiki suggests pictorially what Marrett calls "the fundamental kinship and continuity amid change between all the forms of human life".

"Anthropology", says Prof. Marrett, "is the child of Darwin. Darwinism makes it possible. Reject the Darwinian point of view and you must reject Anthropology also". This view, simply stated, is that all the creatures that exist on the face of the earth are not special individual creations but lineal descendants of some few beings which lived long before the first bed of the Silurian system was deposited. Growth and reproduction, inheritance, variability, struggle for existence and natural selection are the general laws that determine the emergence of the conflicting variety of species around us. "There is grandeur in this view of

life," says Darwin, "with its several powers, having been originally breathed by the Creator into a few forms or into one; and that whilst this planet has gone cycling on according to the fixed law of gravity, from so simple a beginning, endless forms most beautiful and most wonderful have been, and are being, evolved." Hence, a scientific study of man, affected by the same laws that govern the development of all beings, evolving, in his reaction to his natural environment, various grades of culture, is the special province of Anthropology.

At the moment our interest in Anthropology is not for the sake of understanding the *Vanar sena* or primitive society in India or to decide whether the Dravidians colonized Mohenjodaro and Harrapa. The anthropological approach brings us within sight of some of those forces which have determined the rise or decline of primitive cultures. It may furnish some clue to our own problem of progress. It may help us to detect diseased tendencies in our cultural system. For, if such tendencies exist, some means must be found for their eradication before we can be healthy enough as a nation to foster the progressive tendencies.

The possibility of interpreting the course of human development according to the Darwinian theory of evolution attracted the earliest representatives of Anthropology. Tylor, Lewis Morgan and Bastian tended to refer all social changes to one single immutable law. They believed that this law followed a similar course in every region of the world, amongst every race and people. Brinton, one of the prominent anthropologists of the 19th century, gives an excellent summary of this point of view. "These two principles or rather

demonstrated truths (the unity of the mind of man and the substantial uniformity of its action under like conditions) form the broad and secure foundations of Ethnic Psychology....As there are conditions that are universal, such as the structure and functions of the body, its general relations to its surroundings, its needs and powers, these developed everywhere at first the like psychical activities or mental expressions. They constitute what Bastian has happily called the *elementary ideas* of our species. In all races, over all continents, they present themselves with a wonderful sameness, which led the older students of man to the fallacious supposition that they must have been borrowed from some common centre."

As an alternative to the theory of borrowing those anthropologists suggested a theory of the innate uniformity of the human mind which was supposed to develop everywhere in the same way. Since totemism was found to characterize the primitives of Australia, anthropologists assumed that every people must have passed through a similar stage and that the emergence of more advanced social institutions must everywhere have been preceded by totemism. Exceptions were disregarded. The possibility of famines and migrations-or invasions and inter-mingling was ignored. Historical culture-contacts were set aside. With all the optimism of a new discovery Anthropologists believed that their new science furnished a set of laws by which the whole course of social evolution could be explained without the aid of History. Indeed, some of them went so far as to think of Anthropology as taking the place of History.

A timely rebuke was administered by a historian. F. W. Maitland pointed out the fallacies involved in the application of the evolutionary method to social science. He demonstrated the misleading results of such a process of reasoning. Even if it were possible to prove the unvarying sequence of culture stages, it would still need historical evidence to prove that a particular people had not taken a 'leap' from A to D or from D to P or from A to P. The intermediate stages can by no means be established by assumption. "Our Anglo-Saxon ancestors", says Maitland proudly, "did not arrive at the Alphabet or the Nicene Creed by traversing a long series of *stages*, they leapt to the one and to the other". The Anglo-Saxon race has done rather well in using the labour of other people as a springboard for their advance. However, if this interesting phenomenon occurs in historic times, why may it not be probable with regard to totemism or the knowledge of metals among primitive peoples? The significance of this probability lies not in puncturing the anthropologist's balloon, but in stressing the importance of those conditions which made a 'leap' possible. These conditions cannot be understood without the historical method. Without an understanding of these conditions Anthropology runs the grave risk of floundering into unscientific assumptions.

To the anthropologist's boast that his science was all-powerful, Maitland quietly retorted that "by and by Anthropology will have the option of being History or being nothing." The developments of the last generation have more or less justified Maitland's view. Progressive anthropologists appreciate the value of the

historical method. They recognize, for instance, that the archæologist's spade brings to light not only skulls to be measured by trained anthropologists but hieroglyphics to be deciphered and relics to be studied by trained historians. Dr. Rivers of Cambridge was converted to the historical method by no theoretical argument but by the concrete evidence assembled during his own researches into the social organization and development of the Melanesian people. Actual facts led him to give up the theory that primitive culture is the result of a simple straightforward process of evolution. Facts revealed to him that a long and often complex history produces cultural evolution even among primitive people. His ardent disciples, Elliot Smith and Perry, went so far as to try and show that practically every element of the higher civilization, wherever it may be found, originated from a common source. They traced this original centre of diffusion to ancient Egypt.

Meanwhile, in Germany and Austria, Graebner and Pater Schmidt had launched a spirited attack against the old evolutionary theory of social development. The earlier anthropologists isolated a single class of social phenomena and endeavoured to find an inductive law. All facts of that order all over the world were explained by this law. On the contrary, Graebner studied each culture as an objective whole. Every phase and feature of it was related to the rest. He thus arrived at the concept of *culture-complex* which took the place of Bastian's *elementary ideas* or Tylor's *quasi-geological stages* as a basis for ethnological investigation. He was able to show that the social

development of these primary units is determined by a process of expansion and inter-relation. The new method attracted the attention of leading American anthropologists, Kroeber, Wissler, Lowie and Goldenwieser. This school resolutely resists the tendency to over-simplification. It fully recognizes the complexity of the cultural process.

One cannot get away from the fact that a human group on its reaction to its environment is the ultimate basis of all cultural progress or decline. Geographical features and historical events affect the environment. The human group is affected by its economic needs. In the interaction of economic needs and natural resources the human group acquires its habits of life, its tools, its ideas of social morality and social gradation, and its outlook on life. According as the human group reacts masterfully, revising its outlook, improving its tools, adapting its habits, it makes progress. If its reaction is ineffectual, if it fails to alter its outlook when conditions change, to improve its tools with the increase of knowledge, and to remould its habits in response to new demands, it declines. Each advance renders the human group more capable of mastering its environment. Each retrogressive step makes it weaker. Cultural advance is not made by getting away from the demands of the social environment but by conscious reaction. By renouncing his material as *maya* no artist can either express his ideas or further the art of painting. He must enter into his material with a fine zest and through it endow his dreams with form and colour, grace and beauty and thus transform the materials he uses. Religion, when it effects a

divorce between the natural and the supernatural and gives primacy to the supernatural; and Science, when it effects a divorce between the natural and the mechanical and gives primacy to the mechanical, both retard cultural progress. Religion has been the bane of Asia. Science will yet prove to be the bane of Europe.

There is overwhelming evidence, historical, anthropological, archeological and ethnological, to show that a culture becomes real and acquires survival value by corresponding to its natural environment. The higher a culture, the more fully does it express itself in and through its material conditions and the more vital is the co-operation between man and Nature. The factor of regional differentiation is found to be more pronounced not in the lower but in the higher cultures. On the other hand, a deadening uniformity characterizes a 'hunting' culture over a whole continent. An 'agrarian' culture tends to evolve new regional types varying with every variation of geographical conditions. Bengal and Maharashtra, the Punjab and South India furnish examples of typical differences. Hunters must carry a light baggage of culture-values. Agriculturists can afford to accumulate. Hunters kill to live. Agriculturists produce. Hunters look upon Nature as hostile, something to be conquered. Agriculturists treat Nature with a kind of devotion. Nature-worship inspires poetry and art, music and dance, and festivals of colourful rejoicing. The social organization of hunters must be simple enough to be portable. That of agriculturists branches out into a tangle of complexities. The predatory tendency of a 'hunting' culture leaves little room for the relish of intellectual pursuits,

esthetic enjoyment, or creative activity or the multiplication of social niceties. The productive tendency of an 'agrarian' culture draws upon the infinite variety of Nature and fashions a tradition in harmony with a given region.

The 'scientific-industrial' culture of contemporary Europe is a lineal descendant of the culture of the hunters of Central Europe. In the nature of things it continues to be a 'hunting' culture. It has inherited the predatory tendency and the deadening uniformity of its ancestor. This predatory tendency expresses itself in the ruthless exploitation of Nature and labour, in its fiercely competitive economic system, in its insatiable desire for domination, in its hunt for markets and raw materials and the consequent seizure of other peoples' territories, and in recurrent wars of increasing savagery. Its deadening uniformity may be seen in matters of dress and mode of living, manners and customs, in its music and architecture, religious and social formalism. Whereas, Asian culture is essentially 'agrarian'. Its intimate communion with Nature is manifest in every aspect of the life and thought of the people, in their food and styles of dress, in their tools and the purposes for which the tools are used, in their dwellings and settlements, their arts and crafts, their philosophy and scheme of values. *A must kill B before B kills A* is the maxim of European culture. *Live and let live* is the maxim of Asian culture. (Japan is culturally a mimic of Europe!) Violence is a commonplace in European thought. Non-violence has been preached to Asia by

her teachers, notably Buddha. Science has given Europe the technique of exploitation. Nature has given Asia the technique of conservation. The conflict between a 'hunting' and an 'agrarian' culture has gone on for thousands of years. The world-situation to-day is only a projection on an international scale of this conflict complicated by hunting rivalries which have driven the hunters themselves into a fateful war.

Cultural conservation is not the same as a culture-fixation. Some uncritical writers are inclined to make the mistake of equating the one with the other. Conservation and fixation are two distinct cultural phenomena. Both are found in history. The one is resistance to the incursion of alien elements. The other is fossilization. The one is due to invasion and conquest. The other is due to isolation. Among the Arctic people one finds traces of a cultural tradition which goes back to the paleolithic hunters who ranged the steppes of Northern Europe during the later Glacial period. This represents a culture-fixation. The people have been so thoroughly cut off from the rest of the Human Family that they have ceased to be culturally alive. Apart from a few remote or inhospitable tracts, the interior of Africa or the Arctic region, the world has witnessed an age-long process of invasion or migration, racial intermixture and cultural synthesis. India offers the best and China the next best example of conservation. India, more than China, has had a variety of invaders. There has been considerable racial intermixture. But culturally India has conserved much of her ancient heritage, indeed, more than has been good for her. The period of conservation is not

one of progress. Nor is there any likelihood of progress until either a dynamic synthesis is achieved between the indigenous and foreign cultures or the foreign culture is destroyed.

"The study of Melanesian culture", says Dr. Rivers, "suggests that when a newly set up process of evolution has reached a certain pitch it comes to an end, and is followed by a period of stagnation which endures until some fresh incoming of external influences sets up a new period of progress". In the main, a cultural renaissance is due to the influx of a new people, although sometimes the advent of a new outlook or the incoming of new techniques may produce the conditions for a 'new birth'. In the event of a successful invasion three sets of factors demand attention : the reaction of the conquerors to the new environment and its effect on their social habits; the reaction of the conquered people to the new-comers and to their mode of thought and life ; and the gradual racial mixture of the two peoples. These sets of factors are further affected by other considerations. Are the conquerors able to maintain regular contacts with their homeland? Is the religion of the conquerors of a militant type? With what motive did the conquerors invade? Which is the higher culture : that of the conquerors or the conquered?

All the pre-British invaders of India, from the Aryans down to the Mughals, were virtually cut off from their homelands. Of necessity they made India their home. Racially and culturally they were more and more Indianized. The Mughals did exert some influence on Indian thought and life, but ultimately

they were absorbed. The British maintained direct contact with their homeland. They had to do so because they came for trade. They established their rule so as to spread their trade. India was never their home. It was a market for their surplus products and a supply depot for the raw material they coveted. They lived aloof to keep up their prestige. They came from a little island with the insular outlook and made little social islands for themselves wherever they were stationed. They struck a domineering pose. Indians struck a pose of submission. They thought they were superior. Indians pandered to their vanity in public and ridiculed them in private. Between the Mughals and the Indian people there was reciprocity, cultural, economic and racial. Between the British and the people of India there has been only veiled suspicion and dislike.

The Mughals were religious fanatics and broke down some temples. But they encouraged the Indian craftsman of the village. The British were fanatical traders and protected the temples but broke up India's village economy which was the backbone of the whole civilization. They used various devices to cripple the industrial life of India. The Mughals soon established a community of interests between themselves and the people of India. The British by their accomplished play-acting endeavoured to dupe Indians. The Mughals loved the land they had adopted and tried to make it a nation of poets, artists and musicians, architects and craftsmen. The British loved their bureaucratic structure and for its maintenance turned India into a nation of clerks. Perhaps, the creation of the clerical

mentality, next only to the destruction of India's village economy, has been a downright Mephistophelian act of the British bureaucracy. The distinguishing features of the clerical mentality are servility, automatic execution of orders, complete lack of original or constructive thought, cultural inertia. To be a successful clerk one must be depersonalized, merely an automaton. The Mughals gave India a cultural impulse. The British have been instrumental in bringing a scientific impetus into the life of the Indian people. For this we should be duly grateful.

The influx of a foreign people sets up a new culture cycle which normally consists of three phases. The first phase, which may last for a couple of generations, is one of conflict in which the contradictory elements of the two cultures seem irreconcilable. The conquerors fly their banners high. The conquered answer with sullen resentment. The second phase, which may continue for three or four generations, is one of criticism in which each cultural tradition is evaluated by the other and each evaluates itself in the light of the other. It is this phase which is marked by a sudden and brilliant self-assertion of the indigenous culture, as seen in the Greek Renaissance of the sixth century B. C. following the Dorian invasion ; in the Italian Renaissance of the fourteenth century following the Byzantine incursion ; in the Indian Renaissance of the age of Vikram following the Scythian inroad, of the sixteenth century following the Mughal conquest, and of the twentieth century following the British occupation. The third phase, which may endure for centuries, is one of progress if the foreign elements are assimilated in a vital

synthesis, or decadence if the indigenous culture is destroyed leaving the foreign tradition dominant.

If the indigenous culture is either destroyed or driven for shelter to remote places of pilgrimage, there is only decadence to be expected. A cultural tradition foreign to a people may produce an Anglo-Indian community but not a clan of Rajputs. It may throw up esthetic perversions like New Delhi but can never build a Jaipur City. It may improvise the hand-harmonium but can never create the magic of Krishna's flute. The validity of a cultural tradition is seen in its creative vitality. Mimicry is the consolation of the culturally bankrupt. Cultural progress can be measured not by counting the number of bridge tables or billiard tables, cinema halls or dance halls, railway stations or radio stations, nor by rehearsing for the one-thousand-one-hundred-and-eleventh time the matchless achievements of the past, but by testing the cultural *elan vital* as manifest in constant revaluations and reconstructions. The vigour of its literary styles, the strength of its social and political institutions, the force of its philosophy and ethics, the scope of its science and industry will depend on its inner vitality and vision of progress. Its inner vitality is nourished by its intimate communion with its natural and social environment. Its vision of progress is kept alive by its creative activity and world contacts. Its inner vitality is sapped when the culture is unable to put its roots deep into the soil. It is also sapped if the culture is unable to get the light and air of reality. By refusing to clear the jungle of ancient superstitions we do as much damage as by

adopting mongrel modes of thought and life which are not in harmony with our living culture.

The successors of Alexander scattered municipalities, theatres and gymnasia in many parts of Asia. But did they convert Asiatics into Greeks? In some instances they did put an end to the indigenous culture traditions. But that was all. The great network of municipal institutions with which the Hellenistic rulers and later the Roman conquerors covered the subject countries were a mechanical and external product and did more harm than good. The European social habits and architectural styles, the system of urbanization and centralization, the types of school and university which have been plastered on India by British rule have not turned Indians into Britons but have done irreparable damage to the culture tradition of India. Being, not the expression of our cultural vitality and vision of progress, but external impositions alien to our natural environment and social heritage, they have repressed our development. An institution may be reasonable. It may be good for a people in Europe or America. It may have served a useful purpose in its birth-place. But none of these facts give it the historical warrant to be foisted on India. For, that same institution may be quite incongruous in India. It may be incapable of being incorporated into the life and history of Indians. It may be like the European dinner-suit with its choking stiff-collar and starched shirt-front in the sweltering heat and sweat of the Tropics. Any change which is to mean evolution and progress must be the spontaneous expression of a cultural tradition whether in a dynamic synthesis or a new

creation. When the bloom of borrowed *rogue* takes the place of the bloom of health...something must be done to bring back the lost health.

Anyone looking at India in the glorious age of Vikramaditya or at the Mediterranean world in the splendid epoch of Pericles might have fancied that Humanity was on the royal road to the Kingdom of God. Man seemed to have come of age at last. The future seemed assured. The colossal energies of the Vikramadityan era, its grand ambitions, its thorough mastery of the art of life, its immortal creations of literature, music and art, its social pageant made magnificent by courtly men and fascinating women, its all-round economic prosperity and brilliant political achievements, its Alexandrian sweep, its proud and noble outlook, its keen zest for the beauty and joy, the wonder and romance of life, combined to make it the Golden Age of Indian History. It was the same with Periclean Athens. The ideal seemed to have materialized before the eyes of men. A hundred free cities rejoiced in a democracy such as had never been before, while tens of thousands listened to orations which have become models for all time, discussed problems of philosophy in the market-place which the world is still discussing in books, witnessed powerful dramas which inspire every age, delighted in the glory of the Parthenon and endeavoured to emulate those sculptured figures in the perfection of their own physical proportions, animated by a disciplined passion for the true, the good and the beautiful.

And, yet, all this splendour with the splendid promise it held for the future was blighted. Hellenism

withered from within. Vikramadityan India emerged as a fretful invalid. What was the cause of the debacle of these two civilizations, separated by a thousand years and more than two thousand miles, but kindred in spirit? Was it 'loss of nerve', as Gilbert Murray suggests, that caused the breakdown of Hellenic civilization? Or was it the exhaustion of the soil, or the Peloponnesian War, or the introduction of malaria? Why did post-Vikramadityan civilization decline? Was it due to the jealousy of rivals, the lethargy of the people, or invasions from without and squabbling within? A real understanding of that cause will lead to the understanding of the present crisis in our contemporary civilization and the dangers that threaten it.

There is no doubt that in both the Hellenic and the Vikramadityan worlds underneath the external brilliance of two marvellously progressive civilizations the cultural vitality of the people was ebbing away. The very fountain of life was drying up. The debatable question is: How did that happen? Both were neither 'hunting' nor 'industrial' but 'agrarian' culture evolved by hardy men and women who loved the soil they tilled, who enjoyed living in the midst of common regional traditions, and defended those traditions with all the heroism born of love. The typical Greek was not the polished sophist or the boastful colonizer or the glib Levantine trader, but the rustic Acharnian peasant and the Dorian noble, the men who covered themselves with glory at Marathon. The typical Indian was not the accomplished courtier or the glittering merchant or the proud missionary, but the sturdy cultivator of the Indo-Gangetic plains and the Rajput warrior, the

men who repulsed the barbarous Huns pouring in from the steppes of Asia. These were the types that made the grandeur of Hellenistic and Vikramadityan civilizations possible and nourished their respective cultural traditions with their life-blood. They were not wealthy but they produced the wealth. They had no share in the pomp and parade of the times but they furnished the momentum. They were reliable, resourceful, reverent workers who kept the powers of production from deteriorating. In a very real sense it was they who nurtured the philosophy and literature, the art and science, the industry and commerce, the humanitarianism and sanity that came to such a grand flowering for a hundred years.

But in the century that followed, the Greeks ceased to be workers. They became parasites. They gave up tilling the soil for the luxury of town-life. The land was cultivated by slave-labour. The citizen class, decimated in civil war and political revolutions, was drifting to the glamorous cities or to the newly-conquered lands of the East. A gulf was being made between producers and consumers, between workers and owners. The owners were pleasure-seekers. The workers were disinherited slaves. Consumers were not producers and producers were not of the type that had given life to the culture. The living institutions which embodied the cultural vitality and vision of progress were falling to pieces. The town-dwellers adopted modes of life which made the old traditions obsolete and did not inspire the creation of new ones. The vivid nationalism and highly differentiated life of the regional city-state faded into a sickly cosmopolitan

society with no roots at all. The Greeks wanted to be nothing in particular but everything in general. They not only lived in the present but for the present. The Nemesis which had been shown on the stage over-took them in actual life. They mortgaged the future for the prosperity of the present and were incapable of redeeming what they had mortgaged. They lost their greatness by their parasitism.

In the *Raghuvamsa*, that embodiment of Hindu India in the same sense that *Paradise Lost* may be considered the embodiment of Puritan England, Kalidas had uttered a prophecy which went unheeded. His hero, Vikramaditya, the Indian Napoleon thwarted by no Waterloo, was reduced to asceticism by the poet. Kalidas thus endeavoured to dramatize the Indian ideal of victory. After his *digvijaya* or world-conquest, the great conqueror is pictured as performing the *visvajit* sacrifice which implied the renunciation of all his possessions. Would not such campaigns of conquest be a stupendous waste of men and money? Far from it. A conquest should release new influences of progress in the conquered domains. It should be an education for the conquering as well as the conquered people. By active goodwill a comradeship of workers should be established between erstwhile enemies in which victor and vanquished emerge as co-workers for the advancement of all. This is the historical purpose of conquest. This is the only way in which victory can be saved from future defeat. This is the only means of achieving a synthesis between prosperity and progress. If the extension of power is divorced from the intention of using power for creative

human ends, it produces its own future destroyer. The nations of the earth have taken a disconcertingly long time to learn that the extension of power for selfish, nationalistic or imperialistic, ends produces the condition for its final downfall.

India went the way of all victorious nations. In the intoxication of power the rulers set aside the warnings of the prophet as 'poetic fancies' as rulers have done many times since. The metropolitan towns flourished as more and more wealth flowed in from the Indian Empire. The glitter and luxury of town-life seduced increasing crowds to leave their hardy agricultural pursuits and flock to the cities. They revelled in the glamour and excitement, the commerce and corruption of town-life. They coveted government service in the Imperial capital or the newly-acquired provinces. The vital characteristic types in which the spirit of the culture had embodied itself gradually disappeared. New types came into being which could only be parasites. The creative urge of the Vikramadityan period paled into a craving for enjoyment, profiteering and imitation. Just what happened in the Hellenic world happened in post-Vikramadityan India. The same process of cultural blood-letting caused a similar breakdown. Prosperity led to parasitism : parasitism to paralysis.

But moralists are far from the truth when they rail against prosperity. It is not prosperity but parasitism that is to blame. A state of affairs that encourages parasites is disastrous. The urbanization of a culture when agriculture is the staple occupation of a people inevitably leads to the development of parasitical

tendencies. The concentration of culture in the city produces a temporary heightening of cultural activity. But this is followed by the lowering of the level of culture in the vast rural areas. And the cultural activity of city-dwellers is divorced from the natural and social environment of the bulk of the people. Its products are artificial. Its vision of progress is not the natural evolution of cultural antecedents. Its vitality is usually sustained by artificial stimulants and the excitement of passing fashions. The peasant and the townsman live in two different worlds. They hardly speak the same language. Their tastes differ. Their thinking is poles apart. The peasant clings to his age-old superstitions. The townsman adopts heterogenous modern prejudices. The peasant is deaf to the challenge of the present. The townsman is blind to the demands of the future. The culture of the peasant being highly conservative, and that of the townsman being unauthentic, both tend to become moribund.

Is the progress of India, then, beyond the realm of possibility? Are Indian leaders ploughing the sands? Many of them are indefatigable workers, with a vision of progress and the capacity for sacrifice. Will their sustained efforts be of no avail? For fear of destroying our ancient culture, which has withstood alike the ravages of time and the evil conspiracy of circumstances, must things remain as they have been? That prophet of the disinherited, Karl Marx, said ninety years ago: "We may safely expect to see, at a more or less remote period, the regeneration of that great and interesting country, whose gentle natives are, to use the expression of Prince Soltykow, even in the most

inferior classes, *plus fins et plus adroitsque les Italiens*, whose submission even is counterbalanced by a certain calm nobility, who notwithstanding their natural rancour, have astonished the British officers by their bravery, whose country has been the source of our language, our religions, and who represent the type of the ancient German in the Jat, and the type of the ancient Greek in the Brahmin.''' Was Marx day-dreaming? Or have we for a century postponed the unpleasant task of radical thinking and radical reconstruction and sought to rationalize what must be changed? The process of rationalization is like putting on the brakes. It arrests the momentum of progress.

Things would be simplified considerably if India could afford to become Westernized in order to beat the West at its own game. Japan has proved that Asiatics can play the European game as relentlessly and efficiently as Europeans. But if India ceases to be herself, although she succeeds with a fan-fare of trumpets for a brief day, at the end of it she will find herself a derelict actor with no part to play. If in the world-reconstruction that must follow the close of World War II. India is to take her place alongside the two or three leading nations, she must be herself, supremely herself, and not a play-actor. To be herself, nonetheless, India need not be unprogressive. In fact, only when India becomes progressive will she be true to herself. Her illiterate peasant need not remain illiterate. Her annual *per capita* income need not be as criminally low as it is. Her child mortality need not be as monstrously high as it is. Her education need not be as shockingly subversive as it is. Her maritime strength need not

be the lowest in the world. She need not be an agricultural hinterland for Lancashire. She need not be a dumping ground for the surplus products of industrial countries. She need not remain a helpless victim with no outlet for her talents, no recognition of her worth. To be true to herself India certainly need not be like a Hindu widow doomed to a joyless life of penance calculated to serve the convenience of others.

India, like any nation with a long history, must work out her own salvation and in her own way. Her progress cannot be a mimicry of her own out-of-date models or the out-of-place models of the West. It can only be the expression of her creative vitality and vision of first and last things. To be effective it must be scientific. To be real it must be village-centred. If its outlook is equalitarian it will be far-reaching. It will be stable only if it meets contemporary demands. Any progress which is not stable and far-reaching, effective and real, is not worth thinking about. It was believed not so long ago that the triangle of People, Place and Work determined the cast and quality of a civilization. The gigantic strides that Science has taken during the last forty years have changed the triangle into a quadrilateral by adding Time to the other three determinant forces. The process of time now makes an important difference which theorists often neglect. To-day, the same people in the same place will not do the same work in the same way from one generation to the next, whereas their ancestors may not have changed either the work or the method for a hundred years or more. New scientific discoveries and inventions change the occupation of whole rural areas within a year or two ;

and furnish new implements and techniques which alter the method of work to such an extent as to make it all but different work. True as it is, that no matter how progressive a civilization may be, it cannot afford to neglect its ultimate foundations in the life of Nature and the natural region on which its economic and social welfare depends, it is equally true that it cannot afford to neglect the radical changes wrought by time in the matter of new techniques, new habits of life and thought, new problems and new social tendencies. These two basic facts cannot be wrenched apart.

By grappling with the problems of yesterday we cannot expect to push forward. In India we are oppressed with a feeling of futility chiefly because we go round in circles, the circles, albiet, that bear the foot-prints of our worthy ancestors. Our philosophers, instead of helping the vital development of philosophy with their original contribution, are happy in writing commentaries fortified by other peoples' texts. They are out of touch with the living movements of the world and the progress of the times, and hence their philosophical output is patterned on the past and of no great use in leading us forward. Our artists and men of letters, for the most part, produce works which are trite. They may be formally correct. They may even be pretty. But they lack vitality and greatness and genuineness, because our artists and writers go for inspiration not to Life but to the dead past. Our social reformers would be admirable in the setting of the seventeenth century and might have been successful. But they are pathetically unconscious of the living challenging issues of to-day. They condemn the social

tendencies of the present and praise the 'reasonableness' of the past. We cannot live in the past, however much we may want to. Can we be reasonable and live creatively in the present? Brought up in a sultry atmosphere of stagnation, forced to go through educational courses that fit them chiefly for unemployment, Indian students acquire a cynical disgust rather than a thirst for knowledge and find the Cinema more profitable than books. Out of their ranks must come the leaders of to-morrow. Can we expect successors worthy to fill the places of the outstanding leaders of to-day?

Looking at contemporary India we realize with something of a jolt how urgently reconstruction is required and that in a dozen fields. We need Voltairean satirists who can sting us awake. We need novelists and writers of short stories who have the gift of inspiration and the courage to hold up the mirror to us. We need authentic poets, prophets and philosophers who can be gentle and harsh, and, above all, who are determined to be honest with themselves and us so as to compel India into constructive activity. We need men and women of genius who live in the challenging present not rehashing ancient theories, threadbare metaphors, and stale ideas, but creating new forms of thought and expression, experimenting with new methods, giving India in every vernacular the mental and moral stimulus for progress. The initiative for progress will be released when we implement a just social order in which there are equal opportunities for all. Social and economic justice cannot be made real unless India is mistress in her own house. With political independence India ought to be able to give

her 400 millions the freedom from want, the freedom from fear, the freedom from ignorance and the freedom from oppression which will inspire creative activity, moral integrity and national loyalty. In so far as we are willing to sacrifice and work towards this end we shall show the sincerity of our desire for national progress.

CHAPTER V

Economic Foundations

TIME has very little importance for the Hindu. He lives in eternity. His cyclic view of time renders him admirably indifferent alike to death and to all computation of sequence. Whereas, to the modern Westerner time and sequence are the foundation of his notion of reality. This 'historical sense' makes the European outlook significantly different from that of other people and of other ages. The European is suspicious of the infinite. The Hindu is suspicious of the finite. For the European the temporal is the grammar of the eternal. Without it he cannot comprehend the eternal. For the Hindu the eternal is the context of the temporal. The fleeting ages can be understood only against the background of eternity. And, thus seen, time is like a candle to the sun.

With his suspicion of the finite and the temporal, the Hindu reaches out for the reality beyond time and space. His thinking comes to be dominated by the metaphysical universe. While European thought is dominated by space and time. The physical universe is the data for all metaphysical speculations. The title of S. Alexander's philosophical treatise, *Space, Time and Deity*, is an unconscious expression of the trend of European thought. The natural result of this outlook

is a vital interest in Science and History. Science answers the How and History the Why of the physical universe. Science shows the process of material evolution. History shows the causes that determine social and political evolution. But the Hindu is more preoccupied with Philosophy and Religion. Philosophy answers the Why and Religion the How of the metaphysical universe. Havell is right when he says : "Indian history, like Indian philosophy and Indian art, is a part of Indian religion. The scientific basis is there ; the chronological sequence is not disregarded, but just as all Indian art aims at showing the relation between the seen and unseen, between the material universe and the spiritual, so Indian history is much more concerned with bearings which the human events and actions have upon human conduct than with compiling a bare record of the events and actions themselves."

But that is not the whole truth. History and Science both demand exact data perseveringly collected, accurate measurement and inductive reasoning. The scientific outlook is the parent of the historical sense. History develops subsequent to the development of Science. Whereas, Religion and Philosophy leave a good deal of room for imaginative constructions, myths and legends. Religion indulges in fanciful explanations. Philosophy supplies a more coherent and often a more critical exegesis. Hence, Religion has preceded Philosophy and both have developed long before Science and History. We may allow ourselves to be flattered by Max Muller's compliment : "Among nations possessing indigenous philosophy and metaphysics, together with an innate relish for such pursuits, such as at

present characterizes Germany, and in olden times was the proud distinction of Greece, Hindustan holds the first rank in point of time." But as the centuries have abundantly proved, a nation cannot progress on the strength of its religion and philosophy. Philosophy is needed as a corrective to scientific barbarism. And History is needed as a corrective to philosophical abandon.

The vaunted 'historical sense', however, is not a racial characteristic of the European. If the Hindu does not have it in the European form it is because the conditions have been lacking which would have made the so-called 'historical sense' a logical necessity. The advancement of science in Europe led to large-scale industrialization. The discovery of new lands and the growing need for markets as well as raw material led to conquests and the building of empires. Europeans who came in contact with these ancient races and cultures were compelled to try and understand them. Why were they as they were? Why did their cultural development take the course that it did? Why did certain racial traits emerge? These and a thousand other similar problems could not be solved without a historical approach, without a careful study of the origin, development and determinant factors of the civilizations around them. Whereas, India's natural development from Mathematics, Astronomy and Medicine to the larger scientific interests was arrested by foreign rule. The antagonistic elements in the civilizations of Persia and Britain set up a cultural conflict while the racial antagonism of the Mughal or British conquerors created enmity. Indians were thrown on the defensive. Reli-

gion and Philosophy offered a refuge. It has been a disastrous refuge.

Roughly, before History comes into being a people pass through three stages of growth. In the earliest stage they are interested only in *genealogy*. A knowledge of lineal descent is enough for their needs. In the second stage, they are satisfied with *chronology*. A chronicle of kings and the doings of kings suffices. In the third stage, they become aware of racial or national destiny. They feel that the present is rooted in the past and must be understood in its temporal and causal sequence. This is the stage of *archæology*. The stage of History begins when all nations are free and the masses shape their own destiny. It must be universal History showing all the factors, geographical, economic, cultural, which determine the course of human progress or decline. The genealogical stage corresponds with tribalism, the chronological with feudalism, the archæological with capitalism, and the historical with socialism. The average European is by no means at this stage. He is still in the rosy haze of pre-history. But European thought is moving towards the final stage. The end of the Hitlerean War will show how long Europe will take to reach the stage of History.

Actually, Europe emerged from the second to the third stage only a century or so ago. It was as late as the 19th century that German thinkers began asking themselves historical questions. Why was Germany outstripped by Italy, France, Britain, Holland and even Belgium in the imperialistic race? Why was Germany weak? Why was Germany not progressive? By

some such route the Germans arrived at their medieval past. German thinkers felt the need to go beyond the episodic and merely chronological view of History and trace the causes of decline. Then, for the first time, European thinkers endeavoured to enter with imaginative sympathy and often with respectful curiosity into the life and thought of the various people of antiquity and recreate the past in its relation to the present. Germany revolted against the mechanical and mathematical conception of nature and the individualist and utilitarian idea of society which through France had dominated 18th century Europe. In its revolt Germany did much to usher in the romantic as well as the rationalist movements that swayed the Europe of the 19th century.

We may recall that it was the age of classical German literature, of Schiller and Goethe and of the new Romantic movement which had its centre in Berlin ; the age of classical German music which attained its climax in the celebrated creations of Mozart and Beethoven ; and it was the age of classical German philosophy, of Kant and Fichte, Schelling and Hegel and Schleiermacher. Their rationalism was not the cold rationalism of the French Enlightenment. Their romanticism was not the incoherent romanticism of the English Renaissance. A mystical quality gave to this new German culture a characteristic note. To the German thinkers of this period the unity of existence was a kind of vital rhythm. It reconciled conflicting and apparently contradictory elements into an ultimate harmony. Thus, they did not look upon Society as a conglomeration of separate individuals united by

conscious agreement for mutual advantage like the shareholders of some huge company. This was the view held by Locke and the French philosophers. A nation, the German thinkers said, is a spiritual unity for which and by which its members exist.

The conditions prevalent in Germany at the time influenced their thinking. Herder, Fichte and Hegel were obsessed with the need for German unity. The several Pakistans threatening national disruption, the peasant revolts, the general economic discontent aggravated by the German caste system affected German thought and all but determined its course. In the cultural sphere Herder used an idea of *collective soul* to interpret the national development of literature and art. Civilization to him was not the abstract unity of the French philosophers but "an individual good that is everywhere climatic and organic, the off-spring of tradition and custom." Hence German culture was distinctly something that belonged to the German people and they were to be proud of it. This notion of *collective soul* caught Fichte's imagination and he gave it a political orientation in his Addresses to the German people. A definite theory of militant nationalism and of the national spirit grew out of Fichte's utterances which was destined to mould European thought to the end of the century. This nationalist urge proved powerful enough to bring about German unity.

Through Hegel this nationalism was raised to the order of State-worship. He built on the thought of Herder and Fichte but raised an edifice beyond their expectation. The State to Hegel is the supreme reality.

It is nothing less than "the incarnation of the Divine Idea on earth." The highest originality of individual genius in politics, religion, philosophy, literature and art, is merely the expression of the spirit of the people or the age. "These various forms," says Hegel, "are inseparably united with the Spirit of the State. Only in connection with this particular religion can this particular political institution exist ; just as in such and such a state, such and such a Philosophy or order of Art." It is true that one finds it difficult to think of Tagore flourishing in America or Gandhi becoming a British Prime Minister. But we know that a Shelley and a Van Gogh have existed outside of a Communist State. Besides, had Hegel allowed his lofty Idealism to be contaminated by such mundane things as Economics, he would have found that political institutions are moulded not by religion but economic pressure. But this would not have served Hegel's purpose. It would have led his thinking into the uncharted seas of internationalism.

Hegel looked upon physical science as a very limited field of investigation. It could at best reveal the eternal cyclic repetition of phenomenal change. History was far more important. It revealed the working of the Absolute Spirit in time. In History the real is the ideal. Thus, the reality and value of the external world is restored and given idealistic significance. Yet Hegel does not show the power of the social system over men's ideas and institutions or the motive with which the external world is exploited. Of course, he could not realise that his own thinking was being shaped by the social system. It is hard to agree with Hegel and

accept that Imperialism, Nazism or Fascism and Soviet Communism are several manifestations of the one Absolute Spirit in time, however beneficial each may have proved to Britain, Germany, Italy and Russia respectively. Since Hegel was in a deifying mood had he deified the *historical purpose* instead of the national State, his theory would not have had calamitous effects on later developments. As it was, in Germany as well as Britain, Stateworship and an aggressive nationalism continued to vitiate historical writings. Treitschke and Froude are only extreme examples of this unwholesome tendency. And Hegel dialectically defeated his own purpose. Political and constitutional history did not lead up to the fruitful study of comparative cultures and civilization as a whole as the Hegelian method had probably envisaged.

Marx did for History what Darwin did for Biology. Being a revolutionary, his mind was held in no chains, nationalistic or religious, social or traditional. As Canon Raven says: "He strove to see the evidence as a whole, breaking away from the merely catastrophic or episodic views which had characterized his predecessors and striving to disclose and analyse the sequence of cause and effect." He took Hegel's dialectical method from the nebulous region of ideas and planted it in the material and social world. For keeping the conflict of opposites in the realm of ideas Hegel became the sainted conservative. For revealing the class-conflict in society Marx became the hunted revolutionary. Marx pointed out without demur that the changing *powers of production* are the underlying forces of

history. With the increase in men's knowledge, opportunities and achievements, these powers reach higher stages. Each stage gives rise to a changed set of economic relationships designed to further the use of the powers of production. These economic relationships determine in various subtle ways the corresponding social and political structure of each stage of human evolution. Human history is made by the struggle waged between the "classes" created by each set of economic relationships.

The dialectical idealism of Hegel ended in state-worship. The dialectical materialism of Marx ended in the dictatorship of the proletariat. The one was nationalistic, the other international. Hegel plotted the graph of German supremacy. Marx plotted the graph of the rise of the dispossessed. He held that one cannot talk of History so long as two-thirds of humanity is exploited and kept in despicable bondage by the power of *capital* which the remaining one-third happen to possess. Only when the proletariat is emancipated in a classless society all over the world will history begin. Upto that period it is Pre-history, the dialectical preparation of the stage for the great drama of humanity which will begin when the vast majority of mankind comes into its own. What is progress for the *bourgeoisie* is misery and degradation for the masses. Only when the masses are able to shape their own destiny can progress be measured in the truly historical sense. True progress is progress for all.

Spengler's *Decline of the West* was a revolt against the Marxist economic as well as the Hegelian idealistic interpretations of History. The political system based

on Hegelian Stateworship, in which the Germans had planted their faith for a hundred years, suddenly collapsed in 1918. The spread of Communism had a good deal to do with that collapse. Some one had to say the right thing at that moment to give the German people a new outlook which could sustain them in the hour of humiliation. Spengler, an experienced German journalist, hit on the right thing to say. He worked out a sensational explanation of the decline of Germany in particular, and Europe in general, which has presumably influenced Hitler and modern Germany to a larger extent than is usually recognized. Instead of the dialectical acrobatics of Hegel and Marx, he used journalistic appeal. For a decade or so everyone read his book. Some uncritical readers quoted Spengler as if the *Decline of the West* was a record of established facts !

As to Hegel so to Spengler world history is nothing less than a 'second cosmos'. It has its own internal law.....*Schicksal* or destiny.....as distinguished from the law of causality which governs the world of Nature. Hence, the makers of history are men of destiny, unconscious and instinctive in their creative activity. The thinkers are sterile systematizers who have lost touch with the vital urges of their culture. Has Hitler adopted this theory for his own mystical vagaries and for the educational and propaganda aspects of the Nazi movement? Spengler considers instinctive feeling or *physiognomic tact* to be the most reliable approach to the positive aspect of reality. Scientific analysis and reason are for him uncertain guides. Perhaps, it is this *physiognomic tact* that the Nazis try to cultivate

which arrives at reality by following the Fuehrer. Spengler was consistent enough to assert that the roots of historical reality lie not in reason but in the blood. The Race Myth of the Nazis may owe its origin to Spengler's blood-theory. At any rate, if this is so, one can understand Hitler's uncompromising desire to keep the "Aryan blood" of the Germans pure and undefiled. For only so can their historical reality be pure. If culture is exclusively the result of racial growth then foreign racial elements must be removed. How can the Jews be allowed to have any intercourse with the German people?

According to Spengler historical change can be explained only when one understands the unities behind the time-cycles. When the principle that gives unity and motivating power to a culture is grasped intuitively then History takes an organic form. It is possible then to perceive in all the varied phenomena of history the expression of a moulding force. He finds this unifying and motivating principle in the great world-cultures, eight in all. He claims that each has an individual style or personality, which can be sensed by anyone who possesses a feeling for History, just as the individual genius of a great musician or artist can be recognized by a born critic. Having given the reins of his mind to intuition instead of reason, Spengler can ride merrily along enjoying the capers of his steed.

It is not only in the arts or the social forms of a culture that this individual style is manifest. It can be seen in philosophy, science and mathematics as much. Each cultural tradition has its distinctive *number*, so that there is a deep inner bond between the geometry

of Euclid and Greek tragedy or between Dean Inge and Lord Russell. Having chosen an intuitive rather than a strictly logical process of thought Spengler's position is unassailable by the usual methods of criticism. He is thus able to carry his principle to fantastic lengths. Accordingly there is no human activity which is not the vehicle of the cultural soul. Hitler has often appealed to the German people to express their cultural soul in conquest and world domination. And, as Spengler says, every such manifestation is bound up with a geographical region and a particular people and has no validity outside the domain of that culture. The Nazis should have paid more attention to this self-evident truth and recognized that empire-building is invalid outside the domain of British culture. Empires are the manifestation of the cultural soul of Britain. Is that not the reason why "the statue of a fat little lady in hoop skirts presides over the parks of the east" ?

Anyway, the task of the historian, according to Spengler, is to write the isolated biographies of the great cultures as self-contained units, unrelated to each other as two planetary systems. The historian must remember that *historical time* is not mere numerical succession, century after century. It is the registration of a life-process like the seasons that indicate the changes of Nature. And every culture passes through four stages. They are romantically described as Spring, Summer, Autumn and Winter. Mythologies which find expression in epics and heroic sagas mark the *springtime* of a culture. In the *summer* it comes to full bloom with its characteristic philosophies and

mathematics. In the *autumn* rationalism and individualism spread and there is a general loosening of social cohesion. In *winter* the inner development of a culture is complete and it passes into "civilization" which is its inorganic, fossilized counterpart. Hence, the decline of the West is just the passing of Western culture into an inorganic, fossilized civilization.

But, whereas, the other great cultures have passed away, European culture can become "civilization" and yet be saved. It only needs a vigorous nation to undertake the task of conservation and carry it out energetically. The possibility seems to have tempted the Nazis. Spengler insists that artists, poets and philosophers can be of no use. The task that the West faces calls for men of "Roman hardness," engineers, financiers and organizers of the variety of that arch-Imperialist, Cecil Rhodes. Has Hitler taken a page out of Spengler's book? Hitler seems to share Spengler's desire that the men of the new Germany turn "to the technical instead of the lyrical; shipping instead of painting; politics instead of epistemology." Does Hitler not hold as passionately as Spengler himself that the senile forms of Democracy and constitutionalism are signs of decay and must be replaced by a new world-conquering Cæsarism or Fuehrerism? Spengler says that the governing movement of the age is to be *Socialism*, but not the idealistic type of Kingsley and Scott Holland nor the revolutionary kind of Marx and Lenin. It is to be a practical, imperialist, world-organizing "Socialism" which will subordinate both the selfishness of class-interests as well as the idealism of world reformers. It bears a good family likeness to the

"National Socialism" of Nazi Germany with its passion for world-reorganization.

Had Spengler read enough History he would have seen that his theory of the strictly isolated nature of cultures has no leg to stand on. Facts are against it. The one conspicuous feature of world-history is the inter-relation of various cultures. Time and again the life of a people has been transformed by some invention or art of life borrowed from without. European culture would be unthinkable without the inter-mingling of the civilizing influences from Greece and Rome, Palestine and Arabia, India and Egypt. Or turning nearer home, in dealing with Islam and Islamic culture one cannot leave out of account the Jewish culture which was in close touch with the Arabians, the Byzantine Syro-Egyptian culture of the Levant which affected Islam from the cradle. There is the Sassanian-Persian culture which had undeniable influence on Islam even before the days of the Abbasids. There is the culture of Khorasan and Trans-Oxania, mainly Persian but possibly having a Bactrian Greek element, and certainly affected by cultural influences from India, notably in Medicine and Mathematics and Philosophy. Finally, there are the non-cultured peoples, the Turks who were for centuries in contact with Persian and Chinese civilization; the Berbers who had previously been under the influence of the Graeco-Roman culture, and last of all, the Moors and Negroes. In its turn Islamic culture has influenced India and has been influenced by Indian culture. In the face of historical evidence to uphold any theory of cultural separatism is intellectual perversity, to say the least. Any such

theory put into effect in political form is bound to arrest the historical process and prove detrimental to the group concerned. Cultural interaction is a necessity for historical rejuvenation and progress. A theory of *Pakistan* is a theory of decay. *Pakistans* have failed in the past. They are doomed to worse failure in future. Science and History, Nature and human nature are against all doctrines of isolationism.

For a moment it seems that History is full of contradictions and can offer no clue to the solution of the human puzzle. The idealistic view of Hegel seeing "the glory of the Idea mirroring itself in the History of the world" has its caricature in the cynical view of Candide finding in history an irrational welter of cruelty and destruction governed by brute force and blind chance. Spengler's theory of "blood" as the basis of historical reality and historical change is refuted by the interactional development of various cultures. Is it Chance, then, that determines the rise and fall of nations? Was Omar Khayyam right :

" 'Tis all a chequered board of nights and days,
Where Destiny with men for pieces plays,
Hither and thither moves and mates and slays,
Then back again into the closet lays"?

Or can we find in History any reason to believe that a nation's progress is determined by the capacity of its people to unite, to labour and to sacrifice personal and sectional interests for the national good?

In spite of the irrationalities that turn the fortune of nations, in spite of the accidents that seem to seal the fate of some people or race, History does furnish a record of essential continuity and integration on which

a theory of progress can be based. The Marxist interpretation of history unfolds this continuity and the process of integration. The dialectical method of Marx clinches the problem just where it has baffled thinkers of all ages and climes. It shows that, far from being retarded by antagonistic factors, progress is made through a conflict of opposites. Rooted as it is in the logic of life, in the logic of relationships, the Marxist method reveals with ruthless tenacity the important factor that determines the shape of things that are and the shape of things to be. It does justice to the dynamic aspect of matter as well as the directive role of man. Without any of the misleading compunction of the idealists, it brings to light the importance of economic forces in the moulding of social events and institutions and the making of historical destiny. Marxism shows that progress is determined primarily by the continual interaction between what is given to men as their social inheritance, natural and acquired, and the minds of men in each generation. Natural objects make their contribution to human progress, largely though not exclusively, through men's knowledge of their use. The sea is barrier not highway till men learn to make sailing vessels. Coal becomes a productive power only when men have discovered that it will burn and have learned the art of mining. It avoids the pitfall of absolute idealism as well as the pitfall of crass materialism. It emphasizes the importance of mind and matter, and what is more, the fundamental importance of their inter-relation.

It was at this point of inter-relation that the Empire-builders of the 19th century made their gravest histori-

cal blunder. They believed they were sent out by the Almighty on a 'civilizing mission.' They felt they were justified in grabbing the territories of peaceful peoples in Asia, Africa, America and Australia and in the Pacific because they were going to harness these teeming millions to the European chariot of progress. They were sure that European goods, cotton fabrics and glass beads, steel implements and chinaware, and Christian hymn-books and concertinas would soon give the 'backward' peoples a grateful desire for 'civilization' and be sufficient recompense for the jewels and precious metals, the spices and raw materials, that were carried away. But to carry away their pillage and to move their troops they had to construct railway lines. To have cheap clerical labour they had to start schools and colleges. In 1853 Marx had said : "You cannot maintain a net of railways over an immense country without introducing all those industrial processes necessary to meet the immediate current wants of Railway locomotion, and out of which there must grow the application of machinery to those branches of industry not immediately connected with railways. The Railway system will, therefore, become, in India, truly the forerunner of modern industry." To introduce machinery and education, no matter with what motive, is to sow the seed of revolution. Every ship that brought European goods also brought the explosive ideas of European scientists and revolutionary thinkers. Every ship that took away rich spoils from the conquered countries also took the germs of the dread disease of international conflict. Scientific knowledge and revolutionary ideas must arouse and energize. International

wars must weaken and disintegrate. The aggressive West by its fierce aggressiveness is growing weaker and more disintegrated. The Orient is gaining strength and clarity of vision, though the price has been extortionate. A new and vigorous Nationalism has come to birth in Asia. Imperialism has given birth to its own destroyer.

But the ideal of Nationalism with all the surging emotions that it arouses will not bring about the salvation of any country as by divine fiat. We must not forget that the established ideas and institutions of an age, except a revolutionary one, are the legacy of the preceding age. These ideas and institutions are not progressive but conservative. Witness the opposition of reactionary elements to the Indian National Congress in the political and to the Harijan Movement in the social sphere. Our rural population inherits the fixed idea that old is gold. Those thousands of the intelligentsia who are born into Government service have their thinking already mortgaged for the amount of pension that the father or grand-father or uncle or cousin draws every month. Those who reap rich rewards from the *status quo* fight hard to keep things as they are. These reactionary elements combine. They do their utmost to represent change as always and inevitably a change for the worse. The conservation of existing social values is their main objective. This objective coincides with the objective of the foreign ruler. The powers-that-be gladly lend their support to the reactionary groups and together fight against national advancement.

In this struggle between the Changers and No-changers, between Nationalism and Reaction, the Princes,

the communalists, landlords and trade-lords throw their weight on the side of reaction. Nationalism is powerless until it can stand up against the authority of the *status quo*, guarded as it is by priests and teachers, magistrates and police constables. With unfaltering patience and undaunted confidence Nationalism must educate public opinion. The people must be taught that conservative forces do not contribute towards progress. They must be shown that those ideas and institutions which are identified with living and growing social forces play a creative role in History and further its progressive processes. Mere slogans will not do. Slogans must be backed by deeds. The role of ideas in history is profoundly important. But ideas and ideals are glorious nonentities unless they become conscious intentions urging men to action. No ideal will further society towards progress until it is realized in a vigorous social movement.

India, especially during the last fifty years, has had a galaxy of great leaders who could translate ideals into social action. Their labour and their sacrifices have not been in vain. Modern India has less of the backward look and more of the adventurous spirit than had our ancestors even at the close of the Victorian Era. Our ideas are changing though the change is painfully slow. Our capacity for action is growing though the growth is cramped by compulsory vacations in jail. What is required is an acceleration of the momentum. As a people we need not turn from metaphysics to politics. We need not become a nation of militarists. The momentum will be accelerated if we become a race of workers, not shirkers or jerkers, but reliable, resource-

ful, reverent *workers*. We may continue to have a just pride in the cultural achievements of the past. Yet, we must beware that this pride is not the noisy declamation of a braggart but the national self-respect that comes from healthy appraisal and creative work. No progress can be made without criticism. In the main, criticism has three phases: comprehension, evaluation, and application. To understand an idea or a thing we investigate its origin, its meaning, its purpose, the conditions that made it necessary and influenced its development. In evaluating it we consider the stage of cultural development, the needs, facilities and handicaps of the social group concerned, and estimate the merits or demerits, accuracy or inaccuracy, local or universal value of the idea or thing. In the application phase, we assess its worth against the background of our experience and standards and with the magic touch of originality draw from it what we can for a new synthesis or a new creation which will meet the requirements of contemporary conditions. Whether it is with reference to scientific or aesthetic theories, philosophical or ethical concepts, social forms or industrial techniques, criticism is the basis for all invention and discovery, all advancement and growth.

The minds of men in each generation react to their social inheritance. Criticism is this reaction become conscious, and, hence, articulate. A people who are not critical merely take their social inheritance to keep it buried as the man did his one talent in the Gospel story, and pass it on as it was, without adding to its value. This is not loyalty to the past. The highest loyalty is to add fresh achievements

in the present to those of the past, so that, inheriting a grand legacy, we may prove worthy heirs by passing it on richer and brighter than it was. The uncritical are like somnambulists. They believe things not knowing why. They do things not knowing to what purpose. Can somnambulists be creative and further India's progressive processes? Ultimately, all criticism is a clear-eyed perception and a stout-hearted exposition of social problems and the conditions out of which they arise and of solutions and the forces that determine their nature and form. No two generations have identically the same problems to solve. Each generation, if it is awake and critical, solves its problems as seems best in the light of its specific needs. The same original problem may take a different form in time and must then be understood and solved afresh.

For example, the problem of Hindu-Muslim conflict was understood in the 13th century as one of religious delinquency on the part of Hindus. Celebrated Persian mystics, Jalal-ud-din Rumi, Farid-ud-din Attar and Amir Khusru who were poets, and Muin-ud-din Chisti and Abdul Qadir Jilani who were preachers, came to India to preach their *sufi* doctrines of love and service and converted many Hindus to Islam. In the next three centuries, the same problem was understood as one of theological disagreement arising out of an ignorance of essentials which are universal. So Kabir endeavoured to solve it by uniting Hindus and Muslims in a syncretic faith. He preached that Rama and Allah, Quran and Purana are the same. Devotion to God is the only essential need. Guru Nanak took Kabir's doctrines and founded the community of Sikhs hoping

to accomplish Kabir's purpose. But time proved that this method of polite syncretism did not solve the problem, for the *Khalsa*, the military Sikh organization, became the most implacable enemy of the Muslim rulers. In the 20th century we understand it as a religio-political as well as a socio-economic problem and must endeavour to solve it accordingly.

In every field, literary or artistic, scientific or philosophical, social or economic, we need seasoned leaders who can see problems in their historical setting and carry the nation towards effective solutions. We need men and women of vision and determination who will stir India to her very depths with their vision of progress and with their boundless enthusiasm galvanize every section of the Indian people to act, act planfully and untiringly to make India a free, progressive and great nation. It is at the bar of the future that each age justifies itself. Will ours be a gramophone age playing old outmoded records or will it be a record-making age ?

CHAPTER VI

Charvaka and Marx

INDIAN thought was moving towards *dialectical materialism* as early as the time of the *Mahabharata*. The constituents of matter are there described as *tamas*, *rajas*, and *sattva*. The *Anugita* says: "There is no doubt of this, that as long as there is *sattva*, so long *tamas* exists. As long as *sattva* and *tamas* exist, so long is *rajas*, said to exist." The reputed commentator, Nilkantha, writing about this passage says: "However much *sattva* may be increased, it is still held in check by the *tamas*, and thus there is the continual relation of that which checks and that which is checked between the three qualities." From this undefined conception of the continual struggle of contradictory elements producing evolution it should not have taken even a century for the development of a dynamic theory of reality. But society had not evolved to a stage at which it would demand a scientific outlook on the one hand and a dynamic theory of reality on the other. That is why the world had to wait till the 19th century for Marx to work out a theory of dialectical materialism.

So the promising idea of the evolution of matter and society through a conflict between *tamas*, *rajas* and *sattva* was given absurdly static interpretations. In spite of the fantastic inconsistencies involved it was arbitrarily turned into a handmaid of religious ortho-

doxy. For example, the *Yoga* school added an *Ishvara* to the *Samkhya* categories and proclaimed that the *gunas* are the essential powers of the divine, which are not merely existent in a perfect equilibrium of quietude, but also in divine action. The *tamas* in God is calm subduing all actions, the *rajas* is His will capable of effective and blissful action, and the *sattva* is the self-existent light of the divine being. But, in relation to man the same *tamas* becomes the quality of inertia or darkness aiming at the satisfaction of the senses. The same *rajas* in relation to man becomes emotional energy exciting passions and desires. *Sattva* is the intelligent nature which is supposed to foster goodness.

If instead of this static fanciful interpretation the three *gunas* are understood, in the light of the creative evolution of nature and society, as dynamic qualities of the phenomenal world we stand on the threshold of dialectical materialism. *Tamas* is not darkness but the latent potentiality, the eternal *thesis*, inherent in matter. *Rajas* is not emotional energy but the evolutionary urge, the eternal *antithesis*, inherent in the material world. *Sattva* is not static equilibrium but the dynamic emergent produced by the dialectical process, by the unity and conflict of opposites, by the transition of quantity into quality and by the negation of negation. Thus in the physical world the actual emerges from the potential, in the social world the new social order evolves out of the old, and in the realm of thought complex systems develop out of simple ideas. In each case the emergent synthesis carries within itself the *tamasic* and *rajasic* qualities for further development and expansion.

The continual evolution in the external world, including nature, and society and the mind of man, is produced by the interaction of *rajas*, *tamas* and *sattva*. What other satisfactory explanation is there for the mysterious phenomenon of *becoming*? What is, is continually becoming. To be is to be progressing. Any cessation of the process of becoming is deformity. Hence, the realm of *becoming* not of *being* is the world of reality. The static is unreal. Reality never stands still. Nor can man call a halt to the process of reality because man cannot arrest the conflict of opposites inherent in *rajas*, *tamas* and *sattva*. To make reality appear as standing still what man does is to form abstractions much as a man might take snapshots of a moving panorama. These abstract ideas are *pratibhasika* truths, photographic representations of isolated moments in the process of reality. In themselves they have no value. If these ideas have any value it is because they help us to organize our knowledge of the external world which is the *paramarthika* reality. Since reality is dynamic and evolutionary any logic that can effectively explain the nature of things must partake of the dynamic character of *rajas*, *tamas* and *sattva*. The static Formal Logic is of no avail. It is the Dialectical Method which takes account of contradictions, and, hence, is capable of giving us a working notion of the dialectical process of reality.

The fundamental difference between Kapila and Marx is to be found not so much in their native genius as in the disparity of social development between the periods in which each lived. Kapila was not confronted with the same problem that Marx faced. In Kapila's

time Science had not revolutionized society. Men dreaded and worshipped the forces of Nature. They did not understand them. They could not control these forces. The tools they used were primitive. They were satisfied if their elementary needs were met. Their demands were rigorously conditioned by the scanty supply. They knew no techniques whereby to enlarge the variety or increase the volume of production. Naturally their social organization was much the same as it has been under feudal conditions the world over. The caste system gave them their social hierarchy, their caste-duties and caste-regulations. It sufficed. In Kapila's time there were no theories of Economics to draw attention to the material aspects of progress. Large-scale production was entirely agricultural. The big landlords solved the problem of mobilized labour by coercing their slaves or the *rayat* to supply all the labour required. No one understood the mechanism of exploitation. There was no free market in those feudal times. The problems of production, distribution, economic motives and the like were unknown. Why should anyone have raised uncomfortable questions regarding the relation of economic activity and social privileges or political organization? History had not developed in Kapila's time so as to trace the forces that shape civilization. People believed that history was made by kings. Kings fought. They were jealous of each other's greatness. One king won, the other lost. That was all. The chronicles of events merely recorded dynasties and the major events. No one suspected that the pressing economic needs of a dominant class or caste might

influence ethical and social codes or political activities including wars. They were taught to believe in the primacy of the idea. Civilization was a projection of men's ideas just as Creation was the projection of divine thought.

All idealistic thinking is an escape from the cramping conditions of the social order. So under the feudal conditions that prevailed the dialectic of Kapila was wasted in subjective diversions which sported with cosmological and psychological phenomena. Whereas Marx's dialectic was applied objectively to matter and mind, Nature and Society. Then, in the centuries that followed, Kapila's dialectic was crushed within the mould of a static interpretation. The various realistic thinkers failed to draw from it the contribution they could have. While Marx's dialectic was put into operation by the heroic leaders of the Russian Revolution. But there is a marked kinship between the dialectic of Kapila and Marx, and between Indian Realism and Marxism.

With Ramanuja Marx held that there can be no *objectless consciousness*. The distinction between the knowing mind and the known object is the very condition of consciousness. Without something to perceive there can be no perception. Without perception there can be no concept. Thus concepts presuppose a *mind* to reflect on the experience of *things*. Marx believed with Patanjali that the reality of the external world does not depend on the good grace of particular minds. The external world is the external world and not a misleading idea born of *avidya* or a reflection of some ideal substance. This external world is real, is the

paramarthika reality in which all thought, all ideas, all purely mental or spiritual constructions are built. Hence, like Charvaka, Marx said that men can and ought to understand the reality of this external world, *Loka*. They can and ought to make themselves increasingly masters of its development. But they cannot go outside or beyond it. The external world and nothing else is the universe in which they live and think and act. Their knowledge, their enjoyment, their activity is conditioned by it. This does not imply a hedonistic theory as has been imputed unjustly both to Communists and *Lokayatikas* by their enraged opponents. It simply means that it is to transform the external world and make it more progressive, more satisfying and more enjoyable for *all* that we must master the law of its development. As Bukharin said : "The problem of the cognition of the external world is an integral part of the problem of its transformation." Charvaka's theory of materialism was called *Lokayata*. Dialectical materialism may well be designated *Rajasic lokayata*.

Ramanuja emphasized as much as the rebels, Charvaka and Marx, that thought subserves action. Thought absorbed in itself is futile. Action is the test of the idea. Action is the full-orbed functioning of personality. It pre-supposes the capacity to think, feel, will, and execute. Ideas represent the expression of only one-fourth of a person. Human history is the process of human change wrought by human action directed by a complex of ideas, emotions and volitions. The Arobindo Ghoses and Tolstois do not make history. The type of thinking which seeks, apart from the

problems that vex society, a personal and subjective interpretation of man's place in the universe can lead at best to social indifference. It can at best suggest personal methods for the attainment of personal satisfaction leaving society to plod on at its own miserable pace. This type of thinking has proved disastrous in India. The problem of man's place in the universe is profoundly important. Literature endeavours to describe it from various points of view. Religion and Philosophy offer different interpretations. But idealists fail to see that the problem is important because man has the urge to improve his place in the world of becoming not only for himself but for his children. It is important not because it is a religious or an intellectual problem but because it is for man a vital social problem raised by the objective conditions of society. It is important because man is both a rational as well as a social being and seeks to understand his social responsibility and make a rational decision. Thought divorced from social being is pitifully barren. Man thinks in order to act. For action is the law of *becoming*, and *becoming* is the process of life and of reality.

This is not to deny the value of disinterested curiosity or its power to discover vitally important truths. Rather, it is to insist that unless such truths react on social development and further human progress their discovery is meaningless. The material and social conditions of each age raise questions which must be answered. The religions and philosophies, the sciences and arts of each age are essentially attempts to answer these questions. These answers, however,

are moulded by the nature of the society in which the thinkers live. And the nature of society is conditioned by the natural resources at man's disposal, the artificial techniques which he has made, his knowledge and his ability to use his knowledge for constructive ends. These constitute for Marxism the *powers of production*. Hence, Marx's insistence that annoys so many idealists that the underlying forces of history are not religious or ethical ideals or political ambitions but the changing *powers of production*. Ultimately, it is these resources of production that determine the difference between an agrarian and a hunting and an urban-mechanical civilization and determine also the kind of science, religion, philosophy, literature and art as well as the social and legal code produced by each type of civilization.

Each stage reached by the powers of production creates among men a set of economic relationships designed to facilitate and further the productive function. Inasmuch as the productive function is essential for the business of living so these economic relationships become the essential foundation for the socio-political structure. Without corresponding social relationship these economic relationships can never be effective. The relationships between men and men are determined by the accepted relationship between men and things. These relationships between men and men thus define the rights of property and personal freedom and obligation and give rise to various social distinctions. Marx calls each set of social distinctions a class-system. But a corresponding system of legal relationships is required to make each class-sys-

tem effective. The individuals and classes forming a social unit must be protected in and compelled to the privileges and duties assigned to them. Owners must be protected in their ownership and all the conventional privileges pertaining thereto. Workers must be compelled to respect owners and meekly serve them. The legal system secures the appropriate conditions for productive activity and represses any claims or plans likely to prove subversive. Laws cannot be made, enforced and protected without a system of political or religio-political relationships. Thus political systems arise to make the most suitable laws and to punish law-breakers. These economic, social, legal and political relationships established by custom are *vyavharic* realities, imperfect and wholly dependent on the conditions of the age. They are man-made not sanctioned by divine authority. They are not absolute but have only pragmatic value.

The form and content of the law and the political structure or religious code which upholds it are determined by the dominant needs of the economic system. This can be seen very clearly in the different forms which the institution of property assumes in different phases of the progress of civilization and in the changing status of the human beings who perform the required labour. Slavery corresponds to one phase, serfdom to another, free wage-labour to a third. Slavery, serfdom and wage-labour are believed to be legal and political concepts. But at bottom they are economic concepts expressed in different systems of law and in different political and religious conventions. In India, for example, the economic concepts embodied in the

caste-system were made authoritative not so much by legal and political but religious injunctions. Thus caste gradually acquired a religio-political as well as a socio-economic significance, century after century enforcing the duties and obligations of the *sudra* and protecting the rights and privileges of the 'twice-born'. That caste is basically a socio-economic and not a religious institution is further illustrated by the fact that Jainism and Buddhism, repudiating caste on religious grounds, adopted it in the course of their career without any religious qualms.

Among the 'twice-born', the *brahmins* were the highest because they produced the two most important, requirements, religious sanctions and divine concessions ; the *kshattriyas* were the next because they afforded the next most important requirement, protection ; and the *vaisyas* were the third because they produced arts and crafts. But as feudalism developed and warrior-chiefs and their *brahmin* advisers acquired luxurious tastes, economic forces proved too strong for the priest and the warrior and gradually brought them both under the thumb of the banker. With the advent of capitalism the *vaisya* class outstripped the others, until to-day a *vaisya* banker may employ a *brahmin* cook and a *Kshattriya* sentry who thus are virtually no better than the *sudra*. Having reached such an absurd level of deterioration why does the caste system linger on ? Why is it not scrapped when it has become a travesty of the original *varnashram dharma* ? It is usually suggested that social conventions die hard in an unprogressive society especially with widespread illiteracy. This is true. Yet it is a very superficial truth.

Under a feudal regime in any country social conventions resist change. Being predominantly an agricultural country India's social structure is essentially feudal. Until fifty years ago her resources of production remained more or less unchanged. Hence, habits of work, ways of living, modes of thought did not change radically enough to necessitate changes in social relationships. Under these conditions it has been easy for *vaisyas* bankers, landlords and trade-lords who are really the beneficiaries of the caste system to support temples and priests, pay lip-service to the sanctity of the social code and ensure that the caste-mentality will be inculcated religiously generation after generation.

The evolution of the powers of production depends upon the increase in men's knowledge and in their mastery over nature. When this evolution is slow, changes in social relationships are ineffectual and underground. Reformers preach. One or two are converted. But when the resources of production evolve at an appreciable rate, corresponding changes in the social and political structure become imperative. The dominant class, however, which reaps the benefits of a particular social and political system, uses every means in its power to prevent any change in *vyavharic* facts and conventions. Hence these conventions are represented as absolute, ordained by God. To change them is a sin. Any revolt against the governmental authority that upholds this system is a crime. It is so because a government once established embodies the authority of a particular class. Having secured itself in political power this class is most unwilling to yield up its privi-

leges merely because the economic conditions have so changed as to warrant its supercession. Its authority is the guardian of countless vested interests and claims for the protection of which it exists. How can it disregard these interests? Neither logical cogency nor ethical ideals, neither the love of God nor the fear of the devil can persuade any ruling class to undermine the vested interests of its members. Political chicanery, *force majeure* or any method that promises success will be used to resist the demand for change. The resistance to necessary evolution creates the conditions for revolution. The need for change grows in the teeth of increasing resistance. At length the forces making for a change of system grow too powerful to be repressed. By revolution the old political system is destroyed. Its place is taken by a new system which embodies a different set of class ideas and claims.

This is the nature of dialectical progress. The *status quo* at any stage represents the *tamas* or thesis. The progressive forces that come to birth within its framework represent the *rajas* or antithesis. Out of the interaction and conflict between them is evolved a new system which represents the *sattva* or synthesis. But this is not static and immutable. In itself it becomes the *tamasic* condition for the *rajasic* forces that arise in relation to it and the ensuing conflict is resolved in another *sattvic* synthesis. And so the process continues. This holds true not only for political institutions but for all kinds of social organization, ethical values and intellectual concepts. Their progress is determined by a conflict of opposites and

moves parallel to the evolution of the natural and social environment.

Social reformers find it very hard to realize that things and forms of conduct are considered good or bad at various levels of civilization not in accordance with religious or ethical ideals but according as these things or forms of conduct further or hamper the process of production. What satisfies the requirements of the predominant economic system will be judged good and society will accept that judgment and children will imbibe those standards through educational agencies. These ethical ideals, appropriate to a particular phase of social evolution, acquire like the political institutions a sanctity of their own and become stubbornly resistant to change. Along with the law, and sometimes more than the law, these religio-ethical taboos regulate conduct in accordance with the needs of the established economic order. The law would have been powerless to prevent inter-marriage between *brahmins* and *sudras*. But being represented as immoral the barrier has been maintained, and *sudras* can be exploited. Along with the law, and sometimes more than the law, these ethical ideas become independent causes influencing the further development of society. For men think within a social orbit. Their thinking bears the impress of the socio-economic order in which they live. The form of thought on political, economic, religious and literary matters is derived from and corresponds to the cast of society within which the thinking is done. Bernard Shaw, in spite of all his fireworks of radicalism, cannot think outside the capitalistic framework and at best can be only a dilatory

Fabian. Christian missionaries who valiantly preach a gospel of freedom, justice and brotherhood, suddenly turn into doughty champions of Imperialism when the Indo-British question is raised. Gandhiji, hard as he may try, cannot free his thinking from the chains of the feudalism that caste symbolizes and must remain a reformist. Jinnah Saheb's cry for *Pakistan* betrays his feudal outlook demanding a feudal Muslim state safe against the caste-ridden feudalism of the Hindu provinces.

Not that human thought is a mere mechanical product of the economic conditions of society. It is an independent force itself powerful in the shaping of economic conditions. But it is a force which takes its direction from the problems arising out of the objective situation, and this situation is created mainly by the economic needs of the dominant class. That is why a Wilberforce can champion the abolition of slavery but fail to see the burning wrongs suffered by workers in mines and factories under capitalism. This was probably what Charvaka's *Lokayata* system endeavoured to point out through its diatribes against orthodoxy and conservatism, diatribes which were thoroughly misunderstood and ridiculously pooh-poohed by his sanctimonious opponents. Often the thinker himself may be quite unconscious of the subtle influence of the economic factors in his environment. Ramanuja, for example, was quite unconscious of the fact that his *vishistadvaita* theory as a philosophical basis for the revival of *bhakti* was demanded by the needs of the social environment. Shanker's rigorous monism, Buddhist pessimism and the onslaughts of the earliest

Muslim adventurers had produced a depression of spirit which brought about widespread economic depression and consequent deterioration. People were in a state of suspended animation. The *bhakti* movement administered the much-needed tonic. It animated men with a new faith. It gave them an outlet for their emotional energy. It put a song of devotion in their hearts which inspired them to new pursuits and buoyant activity in every sphere.

Patriotic conservatives are shocked to hear that when they fancy they are thinking of one thing, they are sub-consciously thinking behind a social smoke-screen about something quite different. It infuriates religious idealists to be told that the form and substance of their idealism in the last analysis are determined by the economic interests and anxieties of their class. In different ways both Charvaka and Marx told them so. Philosophers like Shanker or Hegel would be just as chagrined to be told that their elaborate philosophy is fundamentally a thought-projection of the conditions appropriate to a particular social and political system. Neither Marx nor Charvaka spared them this bitter pill. No Marxist accuses the religious or philosophical thinker of conscious double-dealing. What he means is that honest men holding certain religious or philosophical beliefs in full honesty may unconsciously have adopted modes of thought fashioned for their class by the economic needs of that class. They may be fighting under their own banner but in a struggle which basically has a camouflaged economic purpose. How tragically this was brought home to many a crippled who took part as an idealist in the Kaiserean War ! And

how tragically true this is of many an outstanding Gandhianist to-day! Some like Indulal Yajnik discover the truth early enough and have the admirable courage to cut loose and start afresh. Others like Rajagopal-achariar never have the impetus to rethink their position, and, disagreeing in details, remain staunch Gandhian idealists.

Or consider the case of Indian philosophy. Beginning earlier and with keener intellectual zest than the Platonic Dialogues, Indian philosophy started its career in a very promising manner in the *Upanishads*. It was the end of the Vedic Age. The *Brahmanas* had already reduced the poetic religion of the Vedas to pompous ceremonialism. The *Aranyakas* had already established *ashram*-schools of thought which were destined to bestow their names to various *Upanishads*. In these 'forest-books' one can see indications of the need for something more satisfying than Brahmanical ritualism. The Aryan invaders had conquered all the territory they wanted. They had been settling down for three or four generations to an agricultural life. Forests had been cleared. There was enough land on every side. Agricultural and pastoral occupations took the place of the nomadic habits of the invaders. The tribalism of the Vedic Age was evolving into a vague feudal society. As the powers of production developed the social order began to change. It was a period of transition. Thought-moulds had not come to be established by the conventions of an established social order. Hence, the Upanishadic thinkers could afford to be more daring and original than the long line of barren commentators

that followed later. The Upanishadic thinkers were more or less independent. They had their land and their cattle. If they needed leisure for intellectual pursuits they did not petition a chief or a king for monetary subsidies. They took in a group of pupils who joined the *guru's* family for the duration of discipleship, tilled the *guru's* land, tended his cattle, gathered wood for fuel, and acquired knowledge in the setting of actual life. Labour had greater economic value than money. Disciples paid in terms of labour for the tuition they received. And it enabled these Upanishadic thinkers to stand on the edge of the social order, as it were, and raise their questions.

But by the time the commentators began their work, economic necessities had made fixed social grooves. Indian thought moved within these grooves and made for itself moulds that fit into these grooves. Any system of thought that went out of the grooves threatened to put the whole socio-economic machinery out of order. It was, therefore, quickly suppressed. The authority of the Vedas was necessary to protect Brahmanical sacerdotalism. Brahmanical sacerdotalism was necessary to enforce religious sanctions. The enforcement of religious sanctions was necessary to reinforce the caste-basis of society. The caste-basis was necessary to provide cheap labour and protect the interests of the 'twice-born.' Thus, we see, that the authority of the Vedas was invoked for the protection of economic interests. Radical thinkers like Charvaka were feared as anti-social rebels. But they were attacked as rebels against Vedic authority and God. Such an attack was bound to appeal to the public imagination.

Philosophy in India, as 2,000 years later in Europe, could not be a disinterested critique of human knowledge as a whole, disclosing the meaning and purpose of Reality in relation to man. Under a feudal regime Philosophy had to be a grandiose structure of mysticism and rationality strangely compounded, meant to buttress the Religion that tormented the pillars of the social order. Feudalism demanded that philosophy be harmlessly subjective, innocently theological, statically conservative. And that philosophy had to be.

Indian thinkers like the Christian Schoolmen did have a sincere love of religion. They did possess a certain dialectical acumen. Many were gifted with unusual insight. But their minds were fettered with the conventions of the feudal structure of society. Feudalism breeds mental and moral servility because it demands socio-economic servility. Scholasticism, whether in India or Europe, is the record of brilliant thinkers held in vassalage to the past. In fact, each school of thought in India was a microcosmic feudal society. It had its intellectual lord and its intellectual serfs, its landed property and its *ashram*-buildings, its official patronage and the revenue that accrued from its political allegiance. It had its feuds with other intellectual lords and their serfs, its regulations regarding treaties and reparations. Shanker's conflict with the Buddhists is only a case in point. It was as much a socio-economic and political as it was a religious struggle. The Buddhists in South India like the early Christians in the Roman world were a political menace. Shanker was used merely as the philosophical spear-

head of the attack on the Buddhists. Thus, it came about that Indian philosophy did not evolve to be dangerously objective, radically scientific, dynamically creative.

In the 19th century complications arose. Under the Mughals Indian society had continued to function in its feudal grooves. But British rule brought about sudden and devastating changes, if only in a few areas. Railways and factories in the nature of things undermine a feudal structure of society which is most secure in an agrarian civilization. British trade opened a large export and import market and small internal markets for India, which, although they benefited Britain more than India, gave an impetus for the emergence of a nebulous middle class—*nebulous* because it was the creature of British Imperialism lacking form or consciousness, *middle* because its members drawn from all castes formed a new commercial class midway between the *raja* and the *rayat* owning allegiance to neither but to the British. This middle class took to English education, trade or Government service, and sometimes to the Christian religion and semi-European habits of thought and life. It produced the doughtiest champions of British rule. It created a novel and complex problem for the philosophers of the 19th century.

Keshab Chunder Sen was a representative thinker of the new middle class. By an eclectic compromise between East and West he endeavoured to amalgamate Hindu, Muslim and Christian ideas, and hoped progress could thus be made. On the other hand, Dayanand Saraswati and Ramakrishna Paramahansa rejected the

social and cultural forms of the West and tried to stem the tide of Westernism by rationalizing Hinduism or by emphasizing action as the expression of devotion and knowledge. The *Brahmosamaj* was founded on the mistaken notion that one can adopt the thought-moulds of the capitalistic society of Europe and through them reinterpret the philosophy and religion of a feudal society. The *Aryasamaj* and the *Ramakrishna* Mission were founded on the equally mistaken notion that by reviving ideas produced in a feudal age one can arrest the evolution of society in spite of the stimulus of changing conditions. That each thinker was able to attract a following of ardent men and women shows that he expressed a felt social need for change. Changing socio-economic conditions demanded a corresponding change in religious and philosophical thought. But that none of the three movements was able to produce a thinker capable of plucking Indian philosophy from the morass of Scholasticism and setting it on the highroad of progress shows that all the three movements were functioning within the constricted orbit of the old feudal system. They could achieve reform but not revolution, revival but not reconstruction, revision but not progress. It will be seen that in the 20th century Gandhi attacked the political problem with the same outlook that characterized Dayanand Saraswati and Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

From the earliest *Sutra* period to the first half of the twentieth century Indian philosophy has been held back by the *tamasic* forces of the social and the material environment. To be sure the *rajasic* forces have

appeared. But whenever a synthesis has emerged it has been overburdened with the conservative rather than the dynamic element. That is why Indian thought has moved not dialectically towards progress but religiously in circles. The progress of social, philosophical and religious thought was checked in India by the lack of progress in the means of production and ways of living. It is misleading to have a brilliant scholar of Dr. Radhakrishnan's learning and critical insight say : "To continue the living development of philosophy, to keep the current of creative energy flowing, contacts with the living movements of the world capable of promoting real freedom of thought is necessary. Perhaps, the philosophy of India which lost its strength and vigour when her political fortunes met with defeat may derive fresh inspiration and a new impulse from the era that is just dawning upon her. If the Indian thinkers combine a love of what is old with a thirst for what is true, Indian philosophy may yet have a future as glorious as its past." The pathetic superficiality of this analysis is typical of the middle class outlook. Let us apply the analysis to Dr. Radhakrishnan himself. His travels, his studies, his indefatigable love of quotations show that he has come in *contact with the living movements of the world capable of promoting real freedom of thought*. Why, then, is his best work marred by an inferiority-feeling and instead of leading the way to progressive and critical interpretation falls to the level of a brilliant Apologia? He has done much of his work in the promising era that was dawning upon India in 1923 when his statement first

appeared. Why did he not "*derive fresh inspiration and a new impulse*" from it? He surely "*combines a love of what is old with a thirst for what is true.*" Why is his philosophical work diffident and unprogressive? It is because he lives and thinks in a feudal structure of society dominated by British Imperialism. He draws his inspiration from the pious hope of revival rather than from the radical will-to-progress. The economic conditions which have moulded the social and intellectual conventions of Dr. Radhakrishnan's class have done much to hold him back from bold and progressive thinking.

If, however, the major phenomena of history, progress and stagnation and decline, are unintelligible except in relation to the development of the powers of production, it is disastrous to ignore the fact that any institution or form of thought, once it has come into being, is capable of exerting an independent influence of its own. While the fundamental and often hidden forces behind historical development are economic, the actual course of events is being affected all the time by forces of various kinds: ideological, political, religious and scientific. To ignore this important fact is to make the absurd mistake of trying to interpret all history in exclusively economic terms. Only the crudest pseudo-Benthamite psychology will support the view that men in all circumstances will be conscious of and swayed by the economic in preference to other factors. Human freedom is not abrogated but circumscribed by economic factors directly or indirectly through the social conventions which are fixed in response to economic necessities.

Ideas, while they are secondary to economic forces, are, nevertheless, direct agents of historical evolution provided they articulate felt social needs. Before progress can be made a society must be conscious of the need for progress. A vague dissatisfaction with things as they are, a moribund culture, economic distress, political disaffection are indications that changes are demanded. But all these must be exploited to the fullest in order to arouse a conscious intention of progress expressing itself in a positive social policy. This is the work of great thinkers and social educators. To express in clear-cut ideas the meaning and purpose of progress in relation to the objective situation is the task of great thinkers. To propagate these ideas inspiringly, vigorously and with good taste is the task of social educators. Literature and art, religion and ethics are indirect and social movements and public demonstrations are direct forms of social education. Literature and art have always served the purpose of educating society to accept a certain outlook and scheme of values. The literature and art of feudal times do not have the same emphasis as the literature and art of the capitalistic age. So does the advent of socialism shift the emphasis once more. The famous adage 'Art for Art's sake' is a notorious hoax. Since there can be no such thing among intelligent grown-up men and women. The vision of the poet and the artist and the utterance of men of letters are definitely moulded and even inspired by the natural and socio-economic environment. Their vision and utterance are definitely restricted by the terms of reference provided for them by the economic, social, political and

religious systems within which they live. What is called 'Art for Art's sake' is really Art for the sake of escape. It is a flight from reality into the paradise of subjective illusions. It is defeatist like *bhakti* poetry.

The social educator and the social thinker arise in response to some stimulus in the objective situation. There is, nevertheless, no mechanistic law whereby the human response is inevitably drawn out. The needs of a situation may go by default because no one thinks and articulates the thoughts required to give coherence and direction to an instinctive social movement. The forces working against progress, working to keep things as they are, never cease from their activities. Hence, advancement is retarded if the progressive forces have no means of expression. There is no inevitable progress. There is no inevitability in history. It is so because there is no inevitability in man's response to a given situation.

Lenin was one of the world's very few men who combined philosophic insight with practical sagacity. In his celebrated fragment on *Dialectics* he says: "Two fundamental conceptions of development are: development as decrease and increase, as repetition; and development as a unity of opposites. The first conception is dead, poor and dry; the second is vital." To understand a process we must discard the pre-Copernican notion of a unilinear movement in a stationary world. The process of history moves in a zigzag in a world that both rotates and revolves. We must seek to disclose the vitality of a process as seen in its contradictory aspects and establish the mutual relation between the *tamas* and *rajas*. We

must follow up the movement of its contradiction through all its stages. Only decay advances without opposition. In all other cases advancement is made through a conflict of opposites. This view gives a key to the *leaps* which characterize the evolutionary process. It explains the changing of a process into its opposite, the annihilation of the old and the emergence of the new.

By the 19th century the capitalist system had come to be firmly established on the ruins of feudalism in Europe. Marx chose the courageous and much-maligned task of applying the law of the unity and conflict of opposites to the social process of the contemporary system. He showed the movement of the contradictions of capitalism from its rise to its decay and predicted the causes that should lead to its final downfall. He showed how the contradictions of capitalism are intensified and how all the conditions are being prepared for a revolutionary solution of these contradictions. He pointed out how it is possible to prepare practically for this stage. The growing middle class hailed a Cromwell to destroy the feudal aristocracy that stood in its way. But when the middle class had secured itself in power it hated a Marx because he showed that the next stage of progress would imply the destruction of that class. Progress is never made without sacrifice. While the tens of thousands follow the line of least resistance and most profit, let ten men consecrate themselves to the cause of progress and that society need not despair.

Capitalism is a competitive system of expanding private enterprise for ever-growing profit which controls

labour, markets, public opinion, governments and the destinies of nations by the power of capital for the increase of capital. Its democracy is a government of capitalists for capitalists by capitalists. Its liberty is the liberty to take liberties with other people's liberty. Its culture is a varnish to make exploitation and snobbery look refined. Its science is a means to prepare greater monstrosities for a more monstrous war. Its large-scale industry must keep on expanding so as to avoid breakdown. In this process of feverish expansion labour is increasingly exploited, money grows more unstable, artificial scarcities and financial crises have to be engineered periodically. Ruthless monopolies at home and fierce competition abroad become necessary. Ideologies come into being to rouse racial hate and contempt. Literature, Religion and Philosophy come under the influence of capitalist conventions and prejudices. Big capitalists of various States come into conflict. There is war. War itself has become an industry under capitalism. Meanwhile for the acquisition of cheap raw material, the creation of markets for surplus goods and for the investment of surplus capital Empires have to be seized and held in the teeth of all opposition.

"Imperialism", said Lenin, "is capitalism in that phase of its development in which the domination of monopolies and finance-capital has established itself ; in which the export of capital has acquired very great importance ; in which the division of the world among the big international trusts has begun ; in which the partition of all territories of the earth among the great capitalist powers has been completed." The process

of capitalistic development creates contradictions and conflict which are intensified at every stage. It creates the working class and the conditions that make workers conscious of their destiny as carriers of the progressive tendency which must lead capitalism to negation. It creates subject peoples and the conditions which give them the scientific and political impetus necessary to negate imperialism. It creates violent inter-capitalist and inter-imperialist conflict which leads to the rise of Fascism. Thus capitalism brings upon itself a fated struggle which must see it perish. While fascist capitalism and imperialist capitalism are locked in deadly combat, at this very moment the conflict between capitalists and workers is reaching its final stage and subject peoples in the empires are revolting against their imperialist masters. Empires are collapsing. Capital is being blown up. Old securities are gone.

Civilization is doomed. But that only means that the present capitalist civilization is doomed. For out of this world-catastrophe a new social order must take shape. The world must be rebuilt on firmer foundations of justice and freedom and peace. A new civilization must be born. The process of history points unmistakably in this direction. The violent crises within the framework of capitalism do not change capitalism as a system. But they definitely create the conditions for the emergence of a new social order and with it new relations between men and things and between men and men, a new outlook, a new philosophy, a new literature, a new civilization, and, we hope, a culture that proves to be not wolfish but human. All partial changes are significant. Every

minor retreat of capitalism is important. They show that the process of development is functioning. The resolution of partial contradictions within the orbit of capitalism and the struggle for their resolution are the ways to intensify and deepen the general contradiction of the capitalist system. The struggle for partial aims must be linked up with the major task of preparing the masses for the decisive leap. For it is the world's disinherited masses, the exploited workers of the world whose natural preparation must be consciously heightened in order to lead mankind towards the new.

If everything in the material world evolves by decisive qualitative changes, then it must be admitted that capitalism too will be replaced by another social system unless the Birlas and Morgans and Rockfellers are able to command the laws of progress to stop functioning. It seems highly improbable they and their class the world over will succeed. What is far more likely is that the next stage of human development will be reached by a *leap* which under the conditions can only mean a social revolution. It was by a revolutionary leap that the middle class destroyed feudalism and established the capitalist structure of society. It will be by a similar revolutionary leap that the workers will destroy capitalism and establish a socialist society. Such a perspective is naturally very distasteful to capitalists everywhere and to their loyal apologists. They take every opportunity to suggest that revolutionary changes cannot advance society, that revolution is indeed a social disease. Religious revivalists and social reformers, philosophers and politicians, some men of letters and even many men of science, sociologists

and economists under the influence of capitalism make out appealing cases for evolutionary development. They offer interesting examples of wishful thinking.

By insisting on the necessity of a *leap* one does not deny the importance of the evolutionary process. Evolution prepares a process for revolution. If there are no *leaps* then all the radical changes in the material and social environment are false and progress amounts to nothing more than seeming changes of that which always existed and shall always exist unchanged. Science, history, anthropology, geology, economics, psychology and sociology furnish overwhelming evidence against such a belief. The evidence points irrefutably to the fact that a series of *quantitative* changes produces an emergent with *qualitative* change. Gradualism leads to an unpredictable emergent. Uninterrupted evolution comes to a point at which a leap is logically unavoidable.

The raising of the temperature of water is accompanied by the quickened movement of its particles. In this way the free movement of the particles of steam is prepared. But until the boiling point is reached the movement of particles remains within the bounds of the old. The properties which become elements of the new quality, whether in the material or social world, are actually created in the old. But until the basic connections of the old are broken these properties belong wholly to the old. In no measure do they denote the gradual growing of one quality into another. These properties like *tamas* and *rajas* are contradictory. Within the bounds of the old they include in themselves only premises for the emergence of the *sattvic* new, and are only a *condition* of

the leap. But through a radical break, through a leap, they become elements of the new.

The gradualism of the last three centuries quickened by the last hundred years of British rule, accelerated further by Congress activities of the last twenty-five years, has prepared India considerably for the progressive *leap*. To expect at this stage of development that India can achieve her freedom from Imperialism by going back to a feudal structure of society is like expecting to gather figs from thistles. It cannot be done. It is at this point that a great deal of hard and clear thinking is necessary. And it is precisely at this point that Indians in general and in particular Gandhianists are prone to think with all the shutters down. It is true that India's progress demands her securing for herself the right of independence. It is equally true that she will not secure this birthright of her's by regressive acts. Political freedom will be gained and will provide the conditions for progress when the movement for freedom includes the transformation of the socio-economic system. Certainly reforms are a collateral product of the revolutionary movement. And yet the revolutionary movement must consciously strive for social and economic as well as political emancipation, that is to say, for a new social order rather than merely a new political regime. In this transformation of the social order political, social, legal, economic and educational systems will change. Only when such a thorough-going change is effected will progress be made in science and industry, agriculture and village life, arts and crafts, education, philosophy and literature. For, only then will India

acquire a new outlook. It will be a social outlook. It will be a scientific outlook. It will be an outlook that demands the best and refuses to be satisfied with anything else.

No progressive thinking, planning and building can be done without this new outlook. Under the old feudal or semi-capitalist conditions India may witness many flares of revival, which, after centuries of dim twilight, may even pass for brilliant progress. But these flares will end in smoke and ashes. Advancement cannot be made with an outlook five hundred years behind the times, five hundred years behind contemporary conditions. By mimicking the literary forms of Soviet Russia or the industrial techniques of Japan or the Parliamentary methods of Britain we cannot transplant those social conditions into India. These imitations, being the products of a social environment which does not exist in India, will be as amusing as freaks of nature and as worthless. It is the responsibility of the great thinkers and the social educators of contemporary India to make the whole nation conscious of the implications of the revolutionary leap. There is scope enough for all the creative talent that India can muster. It will need strenuous and nation-wide activity to make every section of the Indian people realize that a free India must have not only a national government but socialized means of production, not only a political but also a legal system intended for the progress, happiness and well-being of all alike.

India's needs demand that we become a nation of *karma-yogins*, men and women who have a reverence for *work*, intellectual or manual, legislative or technical;

men and women who can think coolly and act quickly and are never handicapped in an unforeseen emergency ; men and women who realize their responsibility and can be trusted to fulfil their duties even though the sky rains explosives and the earth splits and spits out fire. Such reliable, resourceful and reverent workers are the real *karma-yogins*. Moved by the conviction that the masses are destined to be the liberators of mankind they will risk everything to rouse and educate the masses. Keenly aware that new wine cannot be put into old bottles they will not rest until a new social order has come into being to embody the new spirit. They are the gallant supermen who make new worlds out of the ashes of the old. Their memories linger in the epics and sagas of the race to inspire countless generations with the vision and vitality to achieve progress.

CHAPTER VII

Ramraja or Lokraja

THE sweeping influence of Gandhianism lies in its cross-section appeal. It catches the imagination of the peasant and the landlord, the wage-earner and the factory-lord, the Harijan and the caste-lord. It speaks to each in a language he understands. It tells each just as much as he can grasp. The Satyagraha, the Harijan and the Village Movements are canals through which Gandhianism irrigates the minds of the masses and the middle class alike. This unique power of appeal is the secret of its miraculous achievements. For, it has been nothing short of a miracle to galvanize the inert and servile masses of India from north to south and east to west and enlist their active support in the great crusade for freedom. It has been an even greater miracle to draw large numbers of the comfortable middle class to forsake the coveted crumbs of official patronage and join the struggle. What the Congress was unable to do in thirty years or more, it achieved in one decade under the magic of Gandhianism.

What is there in this appeal that has endowed it with such power? Its psychological insight, its religious flavour, its emotional stimulus have some share in making Gandhianism powerful but in themselves are insufficient to explain the nature of the appeal. The basic fact about Gandhianism is that it is *elementary* and hence *elastic*. Whereas, Tilak and Gokhale and

C. R. Das and Lala Lajpat Rai presented brilliantly constructed and impressive ideologies to convince India of the need for freedom, Gandhi boiled his ideology down to a few elementary concepts. That is why Gandhi has been able to capture the heart of the nation while the other leaders did not reach the masses.

The whole complex argument against foreign domination and in favour of political independence is reduced to the elementary appeal, *Satyagraha*, "Struggle for truth." When freedom is equated with truth, the absence of freedom becomes untruth. Nothing could be simpler. All the complications about revolutionary methods and strategy are reduced to the elementary form, *Ahimsa*, "Non-violence." The difficult question of the structure of the national government for which the struggle is to be made is reduced to the elementary idea, *Swarajya*, "Self-rule". Thus, the appeal remains within the grasp of the masses. Being elementary it is flexible. For intellectuals it can be stretched to the full length of a philosophy of non-violence and the ethics of self-rule and social, economic and political applications of truth. Or it can be allowed to shrink to a convenient form for the illiterate. It can mean different things to different people. Yet they can collaborate in thought and action. And the joke is always on the British because the British mind left behind the capacity for elementary thinking with Chaucer and, is, thus, constantly discomfited by the elasticity of Gandhianism.

The vexed question of social reconstruction, whether it should imply the liquidation of caste or not, whether the untouchables should be emancipated without

upsetting the caste-structure of society or not, is reduced to the elementary idea, *Harijan*. The untouchables are 'the children of God' and have a right to enter temples and draw water from public wells and enjoy common human amenities. The 'twice-born' understand that there is less danger in the *Harijan* Movement than in the conversion of the untouchables to Islam or Christianity or even the Arya Samaj and are willing to endorse the Movement. The untouchables themselves, flattered by the name *Harijan* and by the Mahatma's fast in connection with their disabilities, acclaim the Movement with heart and soul. Ambedker's more desperate plans for radical reconstruction are thwarted. *Harijan* leaders of all castes arise. Huge subscriptions come in. *Harijan* children are feted. Desultory plans for the education of *Harijan* boys are launched in a few areas. The Congress takes up the *Harijan* question. A weekly journal is started under the name *Harijan*. Indeed, *Harijans* are allowed to draw water from a few wells and worship in a few temples. But they remain within the Hindu Social hierarchy and remain as the lowest and the least.

The economic question of the poverty of the masses, rural reconstruction and unemployment is answered in the elementary concept, *Charkha*. Not only did Gandhi himself take religiously to spinning but every member of the Congress was pledged to spin a certain amount of yarn every day. Hand-spun and hand-woven *khadi* became the uniform of the nationalist. The *charkha* became the symbol of national deliverance. It flies to-day in the middle of the national tri-coloured flag. The direct propaganda for *khadi* allows a good

deal of room for propaganda against British cloth and incidentally against all foreign products including the urban-mechanical civilization of the West. For the more bigoted Gandhianists to be *charkha*-minded is to be an Anglophobe, picking holes in everything Western. Indeed, the *charkha* has proved a potent weapon of protest as well as propaganda against Westernism.

These five elementary ideas that lie at the heart of Gandhianism, *swarajya*, *ahimsa*, *satyagraha*, *charkha* and *Harijan*, reveal the Gandhian strategy. It simply is a strategic retreat in order to baffle and frustrate the invasion of Western civilization. The quicker India gets back to the good old days of the Ramayana the sooner will British rule collapse. British Imperialism is a logical outgrowth of European civilization. As long as Indians are enamoured of that civilization they cannot fight against Imperialism. So Gandhianism seeks to point out that Western civilization is rooted in violence, and, hence, is saturated with evil. If India goes forward she will be going straight into the pernicious Machine Age. India must, therefore, go back into a thoroughly planned feudalism. It was as early as 1920, at its historic Calcutta session, that in adopting the Gandhian Non-co-operation programme the Congress virtually adopted Gandhianism lock, stock and barrel. After a searching analysis in *Gandhi as I know Him*, Indulal Yajnik observes, "It thus came to pass that the Congress, while adopting his (Gandhi's) Non-co-operation programme, insensibly identified itself with a reactionary social philosophy and economic outlook which loved to hark back to the dead past

instead of moulding the inevitable future." The words gain greater significance when one recalls that Indulal Yajnik was a staunch Gandhianist for many years. Is it any wonder that the masses with their feudal mentality can grasp the feudal ideas of Gandhianism, acclaim and echo them? And is it any wonder that men like Tilak and C. R. Das and Motilal Nehru should find it impossible to accept Gandhian feudalism?

It is a fact that Gandhianism has rendered signal service to the nation during the last twenty-five years. But this fact must not make us blind to the regressive tendency of the Gandhian outlook. Vitiated by strong prejudices, Gandhianism cannot see that its methods do not realize the ideals that it professes. The goal that it has set for India, after political independence is achieved, does not lie at the end of the road it has chosen to follow. In the initial stages of the battle for freedom it has been effective in arousing the masses and in blasting the *ennui* that had settled on the soul of the people. But it cannot be carried into the era of reconstruction that must open with the proclamation of Indian independence. We shall presently see why.

The Gandhian Village Movement is by far the most comprehensive expression of Gandhianism. Our study of it will be based on J. C. Kumarappa's book, *Why The Village Movement?* which is not only an elaboration of the Mahatma's views as stated in his *Hind Swarajya* but is thrice-born and in its third rebirth in 1939 was blessed by the Mahatma's Foreword. "It is a good sign", says Gandhi, "that *Why The Village Movement* is required to go through the third edition. It supplies a felt want. Prof. J. C. Kumarappa answers

almost all the doubts that have been expressed about the necessity and feasibility of the movement. No lover of villages can afford to be without the book. No doubter can fail to have his doubts dispelled. It is of no use to those who have made up their minds that the only movement worth the name is to destroy the villages and dot India with a number of big cities where highly centralized industries will be carried out and everyone will have plenty and to spare. Fortunately, as yet there are not many who belong to that school of Destruction." One may take it, therefore, that as late as 1939 Gandhi still endorsed the outlook advocated in Prof. Kumarappa's book. The fact that Prof. Kumarappa is Secretary of the All-India Village Industries Association lends added support to the belief that his book may be regarded as an authoritative statement of the Gandhian Village Movement.

We have not made up our minds *that the only movement worth the name is to destroy the villages and dot India with a number of big cities where highly centralized industries will be carried out and everyone will have plenty and to spare*. Verily, we have furnished Sociological, Historical and Anthropological evidence for the reiterated belief that any movement for India's progress must be village-centred to be effective. We are by no means enamoured of big cities like Calcutta and Bombay falling all over themselves to be tawdry imitations of foreign capitals. Presumably, therefore, we do not belong to *that school of Destruction* which according to Gandhianism is the only alternative to the Gandhian Village Movement. We realize that Indian civilization is agrarian and will

remain predominantly agrarian for another hundred years. It would be unwise to plan for India in terms of the urban-mechanical civilization of Europe. But it would be equally unwise to plan in terms of an outmoded feudalism. We cannot forget that India has some 700,000 villages and that agriculture is the staple occupation of the vast majority of our people. But does this imply that there can be no improvement in the means of production and no consequent advancement in ways of living, habits of thought and modes of social organization? Gandhianism has yet to face this question squarely.

The more it does so the nearer will it come to Socialism. For, the underlying difference between Gandhianism and Marxism is the way in which each looks at the powers of production. Gandhianism idealizes certain individual and social virtues and would vainly try to actualize these ideals even by arresting the historical process of development. Marxism co-operates with the historical process by bringing the forces that shape history under the control of the masses and thus liberates man and society from the tyranny of Mammon. Gandhianism is subjective, depending on the power of intuition. Fettered by religious obscurantism it can only goosestep along using compromise as its technique. Marxism is objective relying on the scientific method. Led onward by reason it is uncompromising in its conception of the classless society and of the revolutionary method for its attainment. Gandhianism is reformist. Marxism is revolutionary. Reformists are essentially too tender-minded to be radically progressive. They can envisage no change in the structure of society but only a new

colour-wash because they fail to understand the economic foundations of the social order. Marxists are essentially tough-minded enough to demand thorough-going reconstruction and consequent progress. They envisage not a new colour-wash but a new structure of society built on juster economic, social, legal and political relationships. That is why *bourgeois* critics indulge rather absurdly in dubbing them 'destructive'. The destruction they advocate is inevitable before the construction can be made. They know that by idealistic patch-work one cannot fashion a new order.

Gandhianism recognizes the need for certain ideal conditions in the life of Indian villages. To meet this need the Gandhian Village Movement advocates *Decentralization* which is supposed to cope with the problem of scarcity of capital as well as plethora of labour. Diversity and variegation of out-turn are said to be the very essence of decentralization. If democracy is to be attained we are told that decentralization lays the required foundation while centralization kills all initiative in the masses and makes them 'succumb readily to central dictatorship'. Where raw materials and markets are in the vicinity of the areas of production decentralized methods are valuable. Thus, Prof. Kumarappa concludes: "As far as circumstances in our country go, decentralized methods are the only remedy for the ills we suffer from—lack of initiative, want of a sense of responsibility, looseness in business methods, widespread poverty, unemployment and underemployment."

It is believed that if everyone of the 700,000 villages of India becomes a self-contained unit and every indi-

vidual of every village becomes a private *entrepreneur* unemployment, widespread poverty, looseness in business methods, want of a sense of responsibility and lack of initiative will all be set right. Along with agriculture such simple industries are recommended as can be run by individuals or individual families. Spinning and weaving offer great scope for the agrarian masses. Gandhianism rejects industrialized factory methods. The argument is that hand-loom provide a subsidiary occupation for cultivators during their idle period. Factories seduce cultivators away from their staple occupation. Hand-loom need very little in the way of capital. Power-loom swallow large investments. Hand-loom allow a great deal of opportunity for self-expression through work. Factories demand regimentation. Hand-loom enable the worker to obtain most of the profit. Power-loom enable the capitalist to exploit labour. Finally, factories create competition while hand-loom balance supply against demand.

Overproduction undoubtedly leads to competition and all the other evils of the capitalist system. But is underproduction the only remedy for these evils? If it is by underproduction that supply and demand are balanced there can be no hope of increasing the national wealth. It is only as part of the productive energies of society are directed towards producing *capital* instead of *consumable* goods that the methods of production will improve and the national wealth increase. Of course, the decision of what *capital* goods are to be produced and how much is to be spent on such production should be made not by a few who have vested interests but by the masses, the peasants and the

workers. Whether *capital* goods shall be produced or not, what they shall be and how much shall be spent on them should be left neither to the sweet will of petty individual *entrepreneurs* as under Gandhianism nor to the adjustment of the motives of the market as under Capitalism, but should be controlled by Society. When society decides what proportion of its energies shall be devoted to the production of *consumable* and *capital* goods respectively, supply and demand will naturally be balanced with the added advantage that prices will not tend to soar as they must with underproduction.

Further, the Gandhian Village Movement suggests other industries which can be used to decrease the pressure on the land by providing work for the idle rural masses. Flour-grinding, de-husking of paddy, oil-pressing, making jaggery are valuable subsidiary industries, so also are bee-keeping, lac cultivation and sericulture. Then there are industries which affect particular castes but are spread over the whole country, such as tanning, basket-making, rope-making, paper-making, pottery, carpentry, blacksmithy, making of bricks or tiles and so forth. Apart from these, there are cottage industries such as soap-making, dyeing, works of art, metal industries and the like. According to the Gandhian standpoint, as Prof. Kumarappa says : "Production should be centred round the needs of the villagers, and under present conditions, international trade should be at a discount. Things that provide the villager with better food, clothes and shelter should be emphasized rather than articles meant for distant markets."

The next step in this logic of feudalism is the

advocacy of the barter system of exchange in place of a money economy. It is argued that the perishability of consumable goods must be correlated with the medium of exchange if the buyer and seller are to stand on an equal footing. This will encourage consumption and discourage hoarding which in turn will lead to a better distribution of wealth. "To give effect to the spirit of barter," says Prof. Kumarappa, "it is not necessary for us to wait till our monetary system is reformed. The basic principle of barter is to reduce the chain of exchange and bring the producer and consumer together. Money economy has elongated the chain by forging several links between the producer and the consumer. We can effectively shorten the distance by supporting local industries.....When we thus restrict our transactions to the locality, though we may be using coins, we shall be virtually basing our exchange on barter."

It is in the framework of this unmistakable feudalism that one must seek to understand the Gandhian scheme of education. Both the training of teachers and the training of children aim at keeping the village a self-sufficient and self-satisfied unit. The educational scheme for children, the Wardha Scheme as it is called, proposes a course of seven years for boys and girls from the age of seven. The medium of instruction is to be not a language but a craft like spinning through which all the usual subjects are to be taught. Naturally the method is to be not *telling* so much as *doing*. The everyday life of the child and the correlation of the craft, the physical and social environment of the child are expected to afford points of co-ordination for

all departments of knowledge. In seven years the pupil is expected to reach the present Matriculation standard less English. After the age of twelve the pupil is to choose a craft as a vocation and acquire special training. *Learn by doing* is a sound principle. Pestalozzi preached it centuries ago. It was practised in ancient India even before Pestalozzi. But can a craft provide the basis for a child's mental development adequate enough to enable him later to continue his studies in Science or Philosophy, History or Economics? Can the basic education through a craft broaden the pupil's outlook and give him a passion for progress? Will it enable the masses to produce great thinkers, social educators, efficient administrators and creative members of society? But, of course, all this is irrelevant to the Gandhian aim.

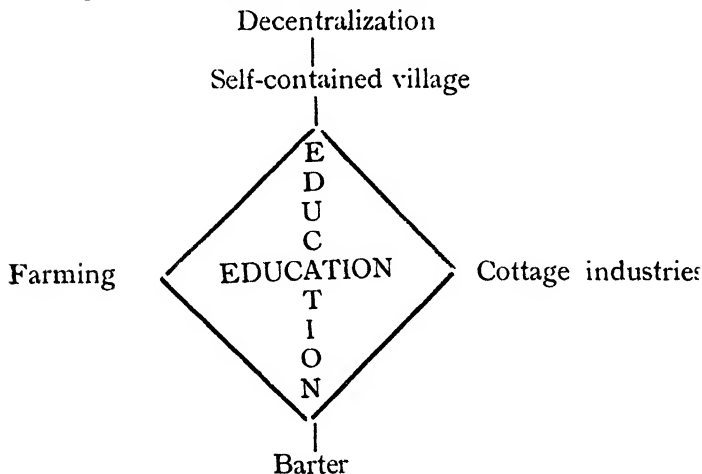
The training for teachers and workers in general is devised with the set purpose of producing true-to-type villagers who can lead others by their example. Prof. Kumarappa says : "It was imperative that our students (workers under training) should be ideal villagers leading the ideal life of villagers. They should support themselves just as any other villager does by his own effort with the help of an industry. To this end our school was remodelled to give the student an opportunity to learn at least one industry by which he can support himself." These workers must be so educated as to be able to influence all walks of village life. They must be able to demonstrate in their own lives how a villager's life should be ordered. They must have the capacity to teach villagers crafts to enable them to earn ; to teach them how to live as useful

members of the community ; and to teach them how to evaluate men and matters. And all these important and arduous tasks must be hobbies for these teachers must till the soil and work at some craft in order to earn a living. One is left to wonder whether such a scheme is meant for mere mortals. Is it feasible ? Is it fair to the teacher ? As it is, the teacher's profession in India, once the most honourable, has been made a mercenary job. Under the Wardha Scheme still further degeneration must be expected. Teachers will have neither the time nor the energy nor even the incentive to be untiring seekers of truth and inspiring educators. Circumscribed by the village in their way of life, they will inevitably find their outlook restricted by the village. Contacts with the progressive tendencies and movements of the world will seem superfluous. Instead of raising the villager the teachers will be swamped by their rustic environment.

In the main the Gandhian analysis of the contemporary situation is idealistic. It recognizes the *prati-bhasika* realities of the subjective world and projects these into the external world, and, hence, is unable to do justice to the *paramarthika* actualities of the objective world of conflict. That is why its proposals are proposals of escape from the stern realities of everyday life. For instance, as Minoo Masani strikingly points out in *Our India*, 72 per cent. of our population works on the land. Less than two millions out of the 400 millions work in factories. "Even if we do go at breakneck speed in the direction of large-scale industry, our population is growing so fast that after ten years, even if our industries absorb 20 million more men, there will still be 400

millions left on the land". But Gandhianism obstinately refuses to see this fact. One is bound to ask : Will the Gandhian method so lay the foundations of the New India as to eradicate the present evils and obviate a series of future disasters ?

The Gandhian system of *decentralization* working towards self-sufficient village units, with an educational scheme to produce true-to-type villagers, and with barter exchange, overloads the historical process with the *tamasic* element. It stifles the progressive urge. It can mean nothing but the stagnation of the feudal dark ages. A diagram may help to make this clear.



Each village will be isolated, producing for itself, circumscribed by its own production, cherishing its own prejudices, unrelated to the rest of the country,

except, perhaps, for matrimonial purposes. (Or, perhaps, in the matter of brides and grooms too each village may become self-sufficient). Naturally, the village will be closed to all progressive influences and enterprises. It will be thrown on its own resources much as are the aboriginal villages. When exports and imports are closed, means of communication must become more and more redundant, markets must dwindle, and, consequently, ways of living must become increasingly feudal. It is for such a feudal structure of society that Gandhianism needs the feudal caste system. Hence, its unwillingness to liquidate caste and its desire to remove those evils which pertain to the untouchables.

Whereas, it is this caste system that has done most damage to India and is responsible for most of the evils which Gandhianism seeks to remove through *decentralization*. It has crushed initiative by making caste-duties more important than self-expression. It has killed a sense of responsibility by concentrating power and responsibility in the smallest units. It has caused widespread unemployment by restricting the possible occupations of the masses who are of the 'lower' castes. It has encouraged laxity in business methods by indirectly condoning the laxity of priestly methods. It has quenched the spirit of enterprise and adventure by rigorously enclosing each caste within arbitrary bounds. It has produced an acrimonious communalism which has become the worst enemy of co-operation and progress. How can these evils be eradicated by *decentralization*? So long as caste remains the basis of social

organization these evils must persist. In fact they will be given greater licence in autonomous villages.

May it not be that Mr. Jinnah is really exercised over the fate of Muslims in such self-contained villages under a feudal regime dominated by the snobbery of the caste system? For, certainly, the position of the minorities will be precarious in such a feudal structure of society. None of the minorities can be self-sufficient in the villages except, perhaps, in small portions of Bengal, Punjab and the United Provinces where there is a Muslim majority. Will not these minorities be at the mercy of the Hindus who contribute to the self-sufficiency of these feudal villages? Why should we complain when Mr. Jinnah plays his trump-card of disruption and demands a Pakistan in which a Muslim feudalism can offset the Ramaraj of the neighbouring provinces? The demand annoys the Hindu Mahasabhaites and the Akhand Hindustanists but none of them will raise a little finger to get rid of the caste system which is the parent of communalism. None of them ponders impartially enough on the question to see that the communal conflict is a socio-economic as well as a religio-political clash. If the socio-economic suspicions of all communities are laid to rest the religio-political issues will not remain intransigent. To the minorities a feudal regime dominated by caste snobbery means Hindu tyranny. The Hindus cling tenaciously to caste. Neither the Hindus nor the minorities are able to shake off their feudal outlook. It is that outlook which breeds distrust and fear. Besides, if Gandhianism can visualize 700,000 self-contained villages, will not each village be a Hindu

Pakistan, at least economically? The 700,000 economic Pakistans will become so many political units in time. For, be it remembered, that economic self-sufficiency is the first step towards political autonomy and social separatism.

Esprit de corps, the attitude of mutual accommodation and an equalitarian spirit cannot be created by implementing a feudal regime. Feudalism encourages tyranny, servility and social discrimination. One can see this in any feudal society. The feudal caste system, therefore, must be destroyed if an outlook of *co-ordination* is to replace the caste outlook of *subordination*. If centralization prepares people for political dictatorship, a feudal decentralization has always prepared people for religious dictatorship. Witness the Pope in feudal Europe. That also explains why Hindus succumb readily to Gandhi's and Muslims to Jinnah's dictatorship. History does not furnish one single example of feudalism fostering a democratic spirit. One is startled to find how the magic of Gandhianism can make otherwise intelligent men mortgage their thinking for the honour of becoming Gandhian lieutenants. With charming naivette Prof. Kumarappa says : "(In India) The social order was governed by the *varnasrama dharma*, which meant that each individual's duty was determined by his unique place in the community. In the economic sphere where people were endowed differently by nature, the practice of *laissez-faire* led to exploitation of the weak by the strong. This tendency was curbed and competition modified by the conception of division of labour under the caste system. Thus by checks and counter-checks

laid down by consideration of fundamental principles, India had arrived at a formula which approximated real cultural democracy and the government it had evolved was truly a government of the villagers, by the villagers and for the villagers."

One cannot resist asking a few pertinent questions. Were the untouchables of the village ever represented in this *cultural democracy*? Or did this cultural democracy always mean the government of the 'twice-born', by the 'twice-born' and for the 'twice-born'? Was the feudal chief or *raja* a democrat? Were not all the villagers in his territory treated as his serfs? Can a division of labour governed by the accident of birth and defined in terms of social privilege ever produce a cultural democracy? Why did this vaunted *cultural democracy* fail to inculcate a feeling of nationality and a spirit of co-ordination? Why did the untouchables go over in large numbers to the side of the invaders? Is the caste system not ultimately responsible for the fissiparous tendency which has been and is the curse of Indian social and public life? Is this fissiparous tendency a natural result of a cultural democracy? The Indian villager gains nothing by our patriotic defence of everything Indian. The Indian villager is no better off by our fine distinctions between *functional* and *cultural* democracy.

However noble its meaning may be by derivation, the word *democracy* has an infamous connotation. It has always meant the exploitation of the many for the welfare of the few, whether in Ancient Greece or Ancient India, in modern Europe or the United States. The Indian villager is not interested in *democracy*.

He wants to know how he can be safe against the landlord's power and the money-lender's wiles and the insecurity of crop-failures. He wants to know if he must for ever be at the mercy of a blind Chance. Although to-day his voice is suppressed he is asking how long he must go on labouring so as to fill the pockets of unscrupulous government officials from the bottom up, how long he must see his wife denied the common amenities of life, how long his children must be put to work when they should be at school.

To all these life-and-death questions the Gandhian Village Movement has only one answer : Grow your own grain ; press your own oil ; weave your own cloth. For the present, perhaps, nothing more can be said. Nonetheless, it is far from being an adequate answer. It dodges the issue of issues : How can the villager gain control of the powers of production ? The caste system cannot enable him to gain this control. Decentralization cannot do it. It is only as the powers of production develop and come increasingly to be owned, not by a few but by all, that the vital and grim problems of the masses in India will be solved. They and only they have all the power in their hands who own and control the resources of production. Cottage industries never yet bestowed power. Small-scale industries and craftsman's guilds and petty domestic *entrepreneurs* producing to meet the simple necessities of the village will always be dominated by those who control the means of production and, who, consequently, control also the social and political machinery. "We must not blindly follow the yellow metal," is a saintly sentiment which cuts no ice. The 'yellow

metal' confers power. It must be controlled by the masses. If it is not controlled by the masses they will be hirelings.

In November 1939, Gandhi said in the *Harijan* : "You cannot build non-violence on a factory civilization but it can be built on self-contained villages. Rural economy as I have conceived it eschews exploitation altogether and exploitation is the essence of violence. You have, therefore, to be rural-minded before you can be non-violent, and to be rural-minded you have to have faith in the spinning-wheel." One heartily agrees that exploitation is the essence of violence. But to have faith in the *charkha* rather than in the peasant is the seed of exploitation. To be rural-minded one must have faith in the peasant. He is far more important than the spinning-wheel. The fact is that Gandhianism lays greater stress on the ideal of self-sufficiency, of which the *charkha* is a symbol, than on the objective control by the peasants of the instruments of production. Similarly, it emphasises the ideal of non-violence far more than the objective removal of the causes of exploitation. Thus, the ideal of non-violence itself becomes a means of unconscious exploitation. Indeed, will the self-contained village not be a form of exploitation? It will curb ambition, restrict enterprise, check advancement. It will force the villagers to be satisfied with feudal conditions. By arresting the development of the means of production it will despotically check all possibilities for progress in ways of living, habits of thought and in social organization. Will all this imposed backwardness in

the interests of non-violence be anything short of *exploitation*?

The only effective check for exploitation is the solid co-operation of the masses. Decentralization brings about disintegration not unity. It fosters a narrow individualism not collaboration. This individualism is the first move in the subtle game of exploitation. It is in effect the defence of the individual's freedom against the encroachment of all other individuals. It makes the self its own end, and, thus, in bondage to itself. Such a self can never be trained to concede the rights and privileges of common humanity. It can never recognize any loyalty higher than egoism. Such an individualist only needs to inherit or make money and must become a capitalist. On the contrary what will really be to the advantage of villagers is co-operative enterprise. They must learn collective farming, socialized industries, co-operative labour and, through these, an unshakable unity of purpose and action. It is through collaboration in the essential business of living that the masses will gain strength, cohesion and mastery over the forces which now control them. It is through such collaboration that they will help to develop and change the methods by which they perform the essential business of living. As these methods advance so will their habits of thought and ways of living advance. And as their ways of living and habits of thought progress so will they create changing forms of social organization. Through some such process of evolution alone will the caste system with all its evils be abolished and with it all traces of communalism. A regressive outlook has never yet

produced progress. Any advance, any betterment that is accomplished, presupposes a progressive perspective. The Gandhian outlook expects retrogression to bring about improvement, compromise to bring about revolution.

Gandhi once said : "The masses do not to-day see in landlords and other profiteers their enemy. But the consciousness of the wrongs done to them by these classes has to be created in them. I do not teach the masses to regard the capitalists as their enemies but I teach them that they are their own enemies." If the *have-nots* are to become fully conscious of the terrible wrongs done to them by the *haves*, surely, conditions should not be created to divert their attention and energies towards something else. The Village Movement definitely diverts the attention and energies of the masses from these wrongs and their remedy to partial palliatives. Once the Gandhian system of decentralization becomes operative the masses will naturally become more and more absorbed in the exigencies of individual self-sufficiency. This does provide a palliative. And they will be farther away from the realization of the radical cure. The partial relief they get by going back into self-centred or family-centred living will make them still more unfit to visualize, strive for and achieve national progress. The disinherited masses can become conscious of the need for progress by realizing that there is no other way out of the misery of the present. They must realize that the private ownership of the resources of production is a crime against humanity and that these resources of production in reality belong to the collective whole, Society,

of which they and all are equal members. This realization will arouse in them a feeling of integrated nationality urging them on to work and suffer, even as the Russians have done, for the advancement and well-being of the collective State.

After all why should there be any objection to the socialization of the means of production? After long centuries of trial and error humanity seems to be left with no other alternative. It seems to be the only method hitherto untried, the only method worth trying when all the others have failed. Gandhianism does concede the need for the socialization of some industries such as public utilities. Why not go the whole hog and bring the total resources of production under social ownership and control? Gandhianism does concede the need for machines and objects to those machines which enable a few owners to exploit labour and collar all the profit. It would be more correct to say that Gandhianism objects to that *system* which enables a few owners to exploit labour and collar all the profit. That system is *Capitalism*. This is very different from the rash condemnation of all machinery and machine-made goods characteristic of the more fanatical Gandhianists. Capitalism is rooted in *himsa*. Violence, mental, moral, social, economic, political and physical, is like the sap that nourishes it. Imperialism is only the monopoly stage of capitalism. Fascism is capitalism grown desperate under mortal danger. War is the roaring fury of capitalist states at bay. What is the use of waxing eloquent over the violence of war when one is blissfully blind to the violence of exploitation which makes war inevitable? Gandhi-

anists who condemn war on the grounds of *ahimsa* and in the same breath defend the private ownership of the means of production are like those who furiously condemn the evils of snake-bite but worship and cherish the snake. For them the ideal is a fetish. And their fetish is all that matters.

Injustice of any kind is violence because injustice is a violation of personality. War is to be denounced in the most unequivocal terms but not chiefly for the carnage and suffering involved, cruel as that is. Primarily, war is a monstrous evil because it is the worst and the most brutal form of violation of personality. It is violation of personality when a person is treated as a *thing* or a means to an end. It is violation of personality when a person is kept away from the common rights and privileges pertaining to the physical, mental, moral and emotional nature of selfhood. Social and economic conditions that inflict malnutrition, nerve-shattering routine, bad housing and prostitution on thousands ; religious prejudices that debar any group from the opportunity to gain knowledge or enjoy human treatment ; political conditions that keep entire nations from their birthright of liberty ; class or caste discrimination which hurts the emotional life of countless people ; political or social or economic pressure that compels people to murder their conscience are various but equally vicious forms of violation of personality, of injustice, of violence. Gandhianism seems so taken up with the contingencies of the political struggle that it often loses sight of the deeper implications of its own logic.

If this is true, if violation of personality is unjust, and, hence, is violence, then anything which thwarts a person's progress towards the full stature of personality is unjust and is violence. A set of conditions in which the infringement of selfhood is reduced to a minimum, gradually to be wiped out, must involve *equality*. This equality does not mean the idealistic verbiage of religious and social preachers ending with the admirable but ineffectual sentiment : "We are all God's children. We are equal. We are brothers." The sheer hypocrisy of such sentiments is revealed in its utter nakedness in social snobbery the world over. There can be no equality as long as social distinctions continue to make economic barriers effective. There can be no equality as long as some have the power to coerce others to work for them. There can be no equality without a social ownership of the resources of production, which implies a planned economy, planned by the masses for the masses. Only this will ensure equal opportunities for all, since the representatives of all will plan and create opportunities to cover the needs of all. Only this will guarantee social and economic equality, since all will work in different ways for the common good, all will sacrifice to varying degrees for the welfare of the whole, and each will realize in concrete day-to-day living that he is an equal partner in the glorious business of making the nation great and free and happy.

Is this what Gandhi had in mind when he said long ago in *Young India* : "I hate monopoly. Whatever cannot be shared with the masses is taboo to me" ? How, then, do Gandhianists propose to do away with the monopolistic privileges implicit in the caste system,

landlordism and capitalism, and enjoyed by the ubiquitous money-lender and the superior male? (Presumably, *the masses* include women). Perhaps, a hint is contained in Gandhi's famous Round Table Conference speech. "I am afraid", said he, "that for years to come India would be engaged in passing legislation in order to raise the down-trodden, the fallen, from the mire into which they have been sunk by the capitalist, by the landlords, by the so-called higher classes and then subsequently and scientifically by the British rulers." Unfortunately, the down-trodden penned up in isolated self-centred villages will have no impulse for progress. They will have no desire to be raised. And, thus, the laudable legislation of which Gandhi speaks will be like the Sharda Act defunct by intention. And the down-trodden will continue to be trampled under foot in spite of the good intentions and the praiseworthy legislative activity of Gandhian idealists. If freedom, justice and equality are to be the structural realities of the New India Gandhianism must boldly devise means towards this and no other end.

No one expects functional equality. Talents will always differ. So will the nature of functions. In any organization some must give instructions; others must carry them out. Some must work in leather, some in gold, others with ideas. But when the functional relations are carried over into human relations and the thinker claims social superiority over the shoe-maker, or the factory manager over the factory-worker and the millionaire over everybody, then the inequality becomes iniquitous. If the conditions are such that the shoe-maker and the thinker, the factory worker and the

manager have equal opportunities and facilities to develop their personality as much as their natural endowments permit, the functional inequalities will not entail any injustice. Inequality is unjust when considerations other than *need* determine the income and standards other than *capacity* determine the rank of an individual.

The only kind of equality that can justly be claimed for all human beings is the equality that abolishes not differences in income but differences in the *source* of income ; that eradicates not gradations of work and office but the *degradation* of lower castes and classes ; that negates not the rise to power of some but the *use* of power for any purpose save the welfare of all. When every member of Society derives his income not by virtue of owning houses, lands, mines, factories or other resources of production but by virtue of services rendered in the present or past or pledged to be rendered in the future, no one can have the power to exploit others. When no individual or combination of individuals has the power to exploit others there is effectual equality. Automatically, the motive for class or caste or communal groupings is removed because there are no vested interests to be protected by such groupings. Those who are elected to offices of authority must work for the welfare of those whom they represent and whose collective will has placed them where they are. Thus the common good and not plutocratic power becomes the objective of economic, social and political activities. This is the life insurance of Equality.

Only thus will Gandhi's dream be fulfilled. "Equal distribution," says he, "the second great law of the

World To-morrow, as I believe it will be, grows out of non-violence. The real implication of equal distribution is not an arbitrary dividing up of the goods of the world. It is that each man shall have the wherewithal to supply his natural needs and no more." That is Gandhi the Socialist speaking. But socialist ends cannot be achieved through feudal means any more than expansion can be achieved by a process of contraction. Equal distribution is not possible within the framework of feudal villages. The fullest needs of the villager's personality will not be supplied in self-restricted villages. The standard of capacity regardless of considerations of birth or caste or creed will not become operative in the life of stagnant villages. It is through collectivization rather than decentralization, through socialization of the powers of production rather than through their individualization that even the poorest Indian will be assured of enough milk, ghee, vegetables and fruits and every man and woman will get a balanced diet and a decent house, as Mahatma Gandhi earnestly desires.

700,000 feudal villages striving for individual self-sufficiency will undeniably lead to national disintegration, moral lethargy and economic collapse. That was the road India took after Aurangzeb. Petty feudal chieftainships revolting against all central authority, unable to unite against the invader, brought about that national disintegration which helped Britain more than British arms to occupy India. On the contrary, 700,000 developed villages bound by the indissoluble ties of collaboration, striving for the highest good of the common unit, the Nation, will make India a first-class Power. The integration of the masses alone will bring

about national unity and strength. Only when the disinherited masses of India become co-terminus with Society as a whole will India rise economically, socially, politically and morally. In their freedom will India's freedom be realized. Through their concerted efforts will her aspirations be fulfilled. Their happiness will mirror her happiness. Their progress will be her progress. Apart from the collective life and destiny of the masses India has neither life nor destiny.

If the achievement of *swarajya* means the achievement of such a measure of equality and justice as is implied in collectivism, then, assuredly, the atmosphere in India will no longer smother the scientific spirit or the progressive urge. Then India will, indeed, make progress, not perhaps in the realm of *Bhakti* literature or *Vedantic* speculation, but in moral dignity which is a counterpart of economic independence, in physical prowess which is the result of united effort, in social and political integrity which grows out of national integration. She will make rapid and astounding progress in harnessing science to the service of man and in forging new instruments for the establishment of peace and co-operation not only among her own people but among the peoples of the earth. Then, taking her place, not among the unprogressive feudal countries, but in the forefront of the nations India will collaborate with similarly inspired peoples in every part of the world to create a magnificent *Lokayana*, the Epic of the People, greater and mightier than any *Illiad* or *Paradise Lost* or *Divine Comedy* or *Ramayana*. That is the goal for a progressive India.

CHAPTER VIII

Inquilab Zindabad

It must be very confusing for those of a tourist mentality, who wish to fly over the country or rush along in a car and understand Modern India. How many Indians as well as non-Indians seem to have this tourist mentality! What is Modern India? Is it the universities that give a smattering of English or the khaki-clad Indian officers who strut about in the various emergency War Services? Is it the man behind the *charkha* or the operative in a factory? Is it the reactionary element crying a halt to all progress or the radical element shouting for a break with the old? How is one to capture the meaning of it all? If one were to be rash enough to depict Modern India one might as well be truly rash and do it in one word*Revolt.*

Inquilab Zindabad...“Long live Revolution!”...is the slogan of Modern India. It is to-day's challenge to all the forces of reaction. It symbolizes the scope of the revolt. For, it is a revolt against Idealism. It is a revolt against Revivalism. It is a revolt against Paternalism. Idealism, revivalism and paternalism are the most insidious forces of reaction. India has found her place in the World Revolution against these three reactionary forces. It may not be a revolt on three clearly-defined fronts. But the revolutionary spirit

that India has manifested during the last two score years and ten articulates her demand for all-round realism, for all-round progress, and for all-round justice. Modern India is determined to act. She is resolved to suffer but not yield. She wills to be free, progressive and happy. This time History is on her side. Who shall say her 'Nay'? The Zetlands and Amerys, the Irwins and Linlithgows are perishable agents of reaction. They have done their worst. But India's will remains unbent. Her head is unbowed. Modern India's will-to-progress cannot be broken. Nor can it be bottled up in self-contained villages.

Perhaps, the first strike that took place in India in 1877, at the Nagpur Empress Mills, was unorganized and not very effective. Perhaps, very little is known about it. But the Indian workers of that generation registered a protest. They forced open a door. Thirty years later, Lenin said : "The Indian proletariat has already matured sufficiently to wage a class-conscious and political mass struggle...and that being the case, Anglo-Russian methods in India are played out." The occasion for Lenin's observation was the historic Bombay Mill-workers' strike against Tilak's imprisonment in 1908. The progress was slow. Adverse circumstances checked the development of the workers' movement. But it was making headway. By 1924 the first radical journal, *The Socialist*, had begun to appear in Bombay under the fearless editorship of S. A. Dange. Of course, it did not have the wide circulation of *The People's War*, the communist weekly that to-day goes to thousands in every vernacular of India. But it did good work in disseminating radical ideas. The

fact that in 1924, when Britain had a Labour Government, the Government of India found it necessary to stage the well-known Cawnpore Trial and sentence four Indian communist leaders to four years' rigorous imprisonment each shows more clearly than any argument that the working-class struggle was growing formidable.

Repression incited greater enthusiasm. Thousands of peasants and workers rallied round the Red Flag. In 1926 the first Workers' and Peasants' Party was organized in Bengal. Other similar organizations sprang up in Bombay, the Punjab, the United Provinces, Bihar and Andhra. In 1928 the first All-India Workers' and Peasants' Party Congress was held and it gave the earnest of a militant proletarian movement. For the first time the 1st of May, 1927, was celebrated in Bombay as Labour Day. It symbolized a new era of the Indian labour movement as a conscious part of the larger International Labour Movement. The next year or two saw a tidal advance of working-class activity. By this time a working-class leadership had emerged inspired by the motive of the class-struggle. Significantly enough, it was capable of operating as a single force both in the economic and the political spheres. This was more than the Congress leadership could do. The spectacular strikes and demonstrations of the working class against the arrival of the Simon Commission gave the proletarian movement an important place in the national struggle. Had the Gandhian leadership of the Congress understood the significance of joining up its demand for political independence with the workers' and peasants' demand for economic and

social emancipation, perhaps, the *satyagraha* movement of 1930-34 would have won a decisive victory. But this was not to be.

The Government continued its attempts to terrorise the working class. In March 1929 thirty-two working-class leaders were arrested from all parts of India and the historic Meerut Trial began. Probably, the outstanding feature of this trial was the presence of three Englishmen who stood in the dock and went to prison alongside their Indian comrades. Nothing could have demonstrated better the international solidarity of the workers' movement. The trial dragged on for four years. In 1933 savage sentences were awarded. But under the pressure of international agitation these sentences were substantially reduced on appeal. Although the proletarian movement was deprived of its best leaders and in 1934 the Government declared the Communist Party of India illegal, Communism proved to be a living force. University students and professors, lawyers and doctors, sons of well-to-do parents and many who were enjoying the forced leisure of unemployment, Hindus, Muslims, Christians, Parsees, were being drawn to the baptismal font of Marxism. In fact, Communism was becoming fashionable just because it was banned.

In 1934 the Congress Socialist Party was formed by a group of young intellectuals who had come partially under Marxist influence and directly under the spell of Jawaharlal Nehru and Subhas Bose. The immediate incentive for the formation of the Congress Socialist Party came in all probability from the collapse of the conservative forces represented in the Congress High

Command. As the Left wing of the Congress the Socialist Party has rendered useful service. But, in spite of the intellectual integrity and fine spirit of men like Acharya Narendradeo, the President, and Jaiprakash Narayan, the Secretary, the Socialist Party has lacked the virility of a proletarian party. It has been more Congressy than Socialist. As Rajani Palme Dutt observes in his excellent brochure. *The Labour Movement in India*: "The special character of the Congress Socialist Party was that membership was made conditional on the membership of the National Congress; the party thus constituted a wing within the National Congress; it operated mainly as an apparatus within the Congress and discouraged mass membership. The objective effect of this programmatic and constitutional basis inevitably represented an attempt to subordinate the independence of the working-class movement to the control and discipline of the existing dominant leadership of the National Congress, which meant, in practice, of the *bourgeoisie*."

In 1937 there was a marked revival of working-class activity parallel to the resurgence of nationalist enthusiasm which led to the formation of Congress Ministries in seven provinces. The Indian working-class had been aroused so thoroughly that it organized 379 strikes in that year in which about 650,000 workers participated. In 171 instances the strikes were highly successful and the workers secured substantial concessions. The Bengal Jute Strike was the conspicuous working-class triumph of the year. Some 225,000 workers acted as one man. The strike secured trade-union recognition and other concessions for the workers. That the half-

starved, repressed, illiterate *mazdoors* of India should be able to manifest such a revolutionary spirit and such discipline and tenacity of purpose shows that the proletarian movement is an inevitable feature of the historical process, and, as such, cannot be ignored.

In 1939 when India had been declared, against her will, a belligerent in the War, while the Congress was engaged in diplomatic negotiations with the Viceroy, 90,000 workers carried out a one-day political strike in Bombay against the War. Till then no other country involved in the War had staged a mass strike against the War. The daring resolution adopted by the mammoth gathering of workers on the Kamgar Maidan is expressive of the international consciousness of the Indian proletarian movement. "This meeting declares its solidarity with the international working-class and the peoples of the world, who are being dragged into the most destructive war by the imperialist powers. The meeting regards the present war as a challenge to the international solidarity of the working-class and declares that it is the task of the workers and people of the different countries to defeat this imperialist conspiracy against humanity." *Inquilab Zindabad* ! has verily become the Indian version of the revolutionary slogan of the world's disinherited.

The revolutionary awakening of India, however, has manifested itself most impressively in the National Movement of which the Congress has been the popular symbol. It is true that the Congress has been hampered in its political campaigns by its *bourgeois* leadership. It is undeniable that more could have been achieved if its collaboration with the awakened *mazdoors* and

hisans had been deeper. But it must be recognized that from the first boycott of foreign goods proclaimed as a part of the *Swadeshi* Movement against the Partition of Bengal in 1905 to the astounding boycott of foreign goods in 1930 was a period of great political development. And the credit mainly goes to the Congress.

In 1905 Japan's victory over Tzarist Russia was directly responsible for the upsurge of nationalism in all Asiatic countries. India came under the influence of this Asiatic awakening. In the years following the defeat of Tzarism by Communist forces in 1917 India shared an international wave of passion against imperialism. It is not sufficiently recognized that the Indian situation has been influenced by external forces quite as much as by internal circumstances. Not only did India send her national representatives to the International League against Imperialism but within her borders loyalists were turning rebels and moderates were being swayed by immoderate passions. By 1919 the revolutionary excitement was spreading to the masses. Throughout March and April 1919, peasant risings, workers' strikes, *hartals*, mass demonstrations, and courageous and determined resistance to violent acts of Governmental repression became the order of the day. The common urge for liberation from foreign rule brought about unprecedented unity. Hindus and Muslims marched side by side in mammoth processions shouting slogans of unity. They faced *lathi*-charges together. Together they vowed to win *Swarajya*. The panic that was created in the ranks of the rulers by the nationalist movement in 1919 may be judged by General

Dyer's temporary insanity in which he ordered the Jallianwallah Bagh firing. Sixteen hundred rounds were fired into an unarmed crowd trapped in an enclosed space with but one exit. According to the Government report, 379 were killed and 1200 were wounded and left without attention.

But India was not cowed. India was enraged. Title-holders returned their titles. Tagore returned his knighthood and Gandhi his *Kaisar-i-Hind* gold medal. The tide of mass unrest advanced rapidly during the next two years. There were stray expressions of it everywhere. In his Presidential Speech to the Calcutta Special Session of the Congress, in September 1920, Lala Lajpat Rai declared : " It is no use blinking the fact that we are passing through a revolutionary periodWe are by instinct and tradition averse to revolutions. Traditionally, we are a slow-going people ; but when we decide to move, we do move quickly and by rapid strides. No living organism can altogether escape revolutions in the course of its existence." While the masses were *passing through a revolutionary period* the Congress leadership was *by tradition averse to revolutions*. This contradiction showed itself at strategic moments in the history of the National Movement. It hindered the revolutionary advance of the masses. The Congress has desired a National Government but not a revolution. It wants the end of British rule but does not want the rule of the Indian proletariat. Thus, it has frustrated its own ambitions.

Early in 1921 Gandhi promised India *Swarajya* within twelve months. Nor did it seem preposterous. The

tremendous success of the Non-violent Non-co-operation Movement, the rising expressions of mass unrest in all parts of the country, the Midnapore No-tax Campaign, the Assam-Bengal Railway strike, the Moplah rebellion in Malabar, the militant Akali movement against the Government-protected *Mahants* of the Punjab, the heroic struggle of countless women who had thrown aside the *purdah* and come out to fight for India, the reckless sacrifice of students everywhere augured well for the triumph of Indian Nationalism. The diplomatic visit of the then Prince of Wales failed miserably. A national *hartal* and black flags greeted his arrival. Imperialist papers such as *The Statesman* cried out that the National Volunteers had taken possession of Calcutta. Government began its repression. By the end of the year 20,000 patriots filled the jails. In a month 10,000 more were added. In such a tense atmosphere the Ahmedabad Congress met at the close of that fateful year, 1921. It is remarkable that the young Communist Party of India as early as 1921 declared in a Manifesto sent to the Congress session : "If the Congress would lead the revolution which is shaking India to the very foundation, let it not put faith in mere demonstrations and temporary wild enthusiasm. Let it make the immediate demands of the Trade Unions its own demands ; let it make the programme of the *Kisan Sabhas* (peasant unions) its own programme ; and the time will soon come when the Congress will not stop before any obstacle. It will be backed by the irresistible strength of the entire population consciously fighting for their material interests." But Communism has never been popular with the Congress High Com-

mand. The one represents the oppressed masses, the other the vested interests. Gandhi, the world-forsaking ascetic, is the arch-defender of the private ownership of the means of production.

And Gandhi was unhappy. He was as alarmed as his official opponents at the turn that events had taken. At Ahmedabad the contest between the Republican Muslim, Hasrat Mohani, and the Hindu feudalist, Mahatma Gandhi, revealed the Gandhian contradiction which has involved Gandhi and the Congress in self-frustrating activity. Hasrat Mohani moved a spirited resolution defining *Swarajya* as *complete independence, free from all foreign control*. Gandhi, the enemy of the British Empire, moved heaven and earth to secure its rejection. And in his success, Gandhi betrayed his feudal outlook, an outlook which has envisaged the overlordship of Britain as a safeguard for a Hindu feudal regime. Gandhi succeeded because the historical process had not developed to a stage when the masses could produce the national leadership. In common parlance, the masses were not prepared. At Ahmedabad Gandhi was made the sole dictator of India. He waited for a month. District after district appealed for permission to launch a No-tax Campaign. The permission was not given. The 30,000 patriots and the leaders in jail watched with bated breath. The Indian people suffered the terrible blows of imperialist repression eagerly hoping that Gandhi would lead the final struggle and India would triumph. But at an emergency meeting, hurriedly convened in February 1922, the Working Committee passed Gandhi's resolution that in view of the inhuman conduct of a mob at

Chauri Chaura the National Campaign was called off. Gandhi had relieved his uneasiness. Capitalism, Indian and British, had put off the day of reckoning. Lord Lloyd, then Governor of Bombay, confessed in an interview : "Gandhi's was the most colossal experiment in world-history ; and it came within an inch of succeeding. But he couldn't control men's passions. They became violent and he called off his programme. You know the rest. We jailed him."

India took six years to recover. But that she did recover, and, on recovery, gave a brilliant account of herself, show that the revolutionary urge was not sporadic but nurtured by the very processes of History. By 1928 the amazing development of political consciousness in the peasantry especially in Bihar under Sahajananda and in Andhra under Krishna Rao, the spread of the strike movement, the growth of youth and student organizations and of the newly founded Independence League, and finally, the spectacular demonstrations against the Simon Commission made it clear both to the Government and to the older national leaders that the Left was progressing at an alarming rate. During the Calcutta Congress session in December 1928, 50,000 workers took possession of the pandal for two hours with slogans for "The Independent Socialist Republic of India" and demanded *irreconcilable struggle for national independence*. The Left wing of the Congress seemed to have considerable strength. But by adroit manoeuvring Gandhi managed to get the support of a narrow majority to delay action for a year. Imperialism lost no time. Within the next three months the most influential leaders of the Workers'

and Peasants' Movement were shut behind the bars. Nine months later at the Lahore Congress, *Purna-swarajya* or complete independence instead of Dominion Status was adopted as the national goal.

All the while Gandhi was more interested in the ideal of non-violence than in the objective realization of a state of affairs in which non-violence could be practised. "I would welcome even utter failure with non-violence unimpaired," said he at the time, "rather than depart from it by a hair's breadth to achieve a doubtful success." So he decided to focus the revolutionary urge of a nation on the violation of the Salt Act. It aroused the sympathy of the peasants but allowed no room for a revolt against the landlords. It interested the workers but kept them out of the struggle. So the next battle for India's freedom began with Gandhi marching with his 78 non-violent followers to the seashore peacefully to break the Salt Laws. But the Idealist had not understood the revolutionary awakening of the masses.

Within a few weeks a terrific mass movement like a whirlwind swept over the whole country. It took the leadership on both sides by surprise. The violation of the Salt Act was nationwide and so was the boycott of foreign cloth and the picketing of liquor shops. Beyond this, nonetheless, spontaneous No-tax campaigns by the peasants in various areas, determined strikes and powerful mass demonstrations, the Chittagong Armoury Raid in Bengal, the revolt at Peshawar whereby the people held Peshawar for ten days, the refusal of the Garhwali riflemen to fire on their compatriots were indications of the overwhelming scope of

the national movement. In May Gandhi was arrested. A strong wave of *hartals* and mass strikes expressed the popular resentment. In the industrial town of Sholapur the workers held the town for a week. They replaced the police. They established their own administration. The bureaucracy was furious. Repression took unprecedented forms of brutality. Ordinances tumbled out of the Capital in startled succession. 90,000 patriots were in prison. Physical terrorism was used to demoralize the masses. The British people will not be proud of the record of repressive measures taken by their representatives in authority in India during 1930-34 when that record comes to be published in detail.

In the mass movement that began in 1930 the deafening Communist slogan *Inquilab Zindabad!* mingled with the tumultuous national cry *Bharat Mata ki Jai!* Wave upon wave of Red Flags were seen alongside the saffron-green-white banners of the Congress. The magnificent courage of thousands of men and women of all classes in the face of indiscriminate firing and *lathi-charges* of mounted police in Bombay, Calcutta, Madras, Allahabad, Lahore and a score of other towns and hundreds of rural areas; the unwavering enthusiasm with which the breaches in the ranks of the resisters were filled; the calm dignity with which men and women of all ranks and of all ages took the blows of repression made every Indian heart beat with pride and admiration. Indians had shed the subservience of the past. Their faces shone with heroic determination. Their feet moved to the martial music of liberty. Their hearts

were sustained by a mighty passion, the passion to be free. Indians in 1930 had become a gallant people.

By July 1930 *The Observer* was reporting *the demoralization of the Europeans in India*. "A Letter From Bombay" published in *The Spectator* of July 5th of that year admitted: "But for the presence of troops and armed police the Government of Bombay would be overthrown in a day and the administration would be taken over by the Congress by the assent of all." By August the Calcutta correspondent of *The Observer* reported: "The news from Bombay that some of the British-managed mills have had to accept the Congress terms and that a prominent citizen is, therefore, resigning his commission from the Bombay Light House has shocked opinion here." Incredibly enough, *The Times of India* (Bombay) raised its voice for the first time in favour of responsible parliamentary Government at the Centre. The anxiety of the rulers increased from month to month.

In January 1931 Macdonald as Labour Prime Minister made a declaration: "I pray that by our labours India will possess the only thing which she now lacks to give her the status of a Dominion among the British Commonwealth of Nations—the responsibility and the cares, the burdens and the difficulties, but the pride and the honour of Responsible Self-government." And six days later Gandhi and the members of the Congress Working Committee were released unconditionally to meet and play with the bait that Macdonald dangled in front of them. After six weeks of negotiations Lord Irwin succeeded in winning Gandhi over and the Irwin-Gandhi Agreement was signed. The next day the tone

of *The Times of India* (Bombay) had changed. It jubilantly asserted : "Such a victory has seldom been vouchsafed to any Viceroy." And Jawaharlal Nehru was left to ask bitterly : "Was it for this that our people had behaved so gallantly for a year? Were all our brave words and deeds to end in this?" The national movement was called off. But Government repression continued behind various smoke-screens.

In September 1931 Gandhi sailed for England to attend the Round Table Conference. When he returned three months later, a pitiful tale of repression and reprisal was awaiting him. He sought an interview with the Viceroy. It was refused. In January 1932, a year after their unsolicited release, Gandhi and all the prominent Congress leaders were swept off to jail. Imperialism had made good use of the 'truce' that followed the Irwin-Gandhi Agreement and had prepared to give the Congress a knockout blow. It succeeded. Be it remembered that at the start of the *Satyagraha* campaign in 1930 Gandhi had *welcomed utter failure with the ideal of non-violence unimpaired*. He got what he had welcomed. The Idealist had played into the hands of Pragmatists. By March 1933 the arrests had reached a total of 120,000. In May 1934 Gandhi issued a statement : "In the present circumstances only one, and that myself, should for the time being bear the responsibility of civil disobedience." Thus the anticlimax came. The *Satyagraha* movement was ended unconditionally. Again Capitalism, Indian and British, had postponed the evil day.

Nevertheless, it was not all loss and no gain. Sad as the termination of the epic struggle of 1930-34 may

have been, one must not ignore the real achievements of the struggle. Out of the disastrous experience of those years has come a mighty strengthening of the Left forces in India. Out of the fire and tribulation of those years has emerged a more radiant nationalism uneclipsed by differences of class and caste and creed. Out of the brave sacrifices of those years has developed a deeper consciousness of national unity, self-confidence, pride and determination. Above all, out of the failure has come the consciousness of the paramount need to educate the masses and enlist their active co-operation in the national movement. This has raised the Congress membership from 636,000 in 1936 to 5 millions in 1939. Besides, the formation of Congress Ministeries in seven provinces in 1937 was associated in the popular mind as a direct triumph of the *Satyagraha* movement of 1930-34, and, thus, the Congress gained tremendously in prestige. Incidentally, the Congress Ministeries gradually succeeded in releasing almost all the political prisoners still suffering imprisonment for action as far back as the Moplah rising of 1921 or Chauri Chaura of 1922. Those of the Meerut prisoners still undergoing sentence and the Garhwali riflemen were also set free. Securities taken from newspapers were returned. Blacklists of newspapers debarred from Government advertising and printing were cancelled. All this liberty resulted in an enormous growth of political literature in the Congress provinces and a renewed desire for freedom.

Indeed, when the crowds shout *Inquilab Zindabad* ! they proclaim India's passion for progress. Modern India is no longer a docile, subservient, static India,

drugged with religious superstition, emasculated with poverty and bound with a vicious fatalism. It is an India that is awake, critical and realistic. It is an India which has been awakened by the quickening touch of world forces and is determined to fight against idealism, revivalism and paternalism. For, she has at length realized that the alternative is national suicide. A revolutionary movement is only the spirit of progress in action. Real progress is made through social revolutions not through reforms. For reforms affect errors on the surface and it is only by a revolution that Society can lay the foundations of a new structure more compatible with changed conditions.

It is because the revolutionary and not the reformist forces play a creative role in History and further the historical process that Gandhian idealism, revivalism and subtle paternalism have failed in spite of the Gandhian multitudes. The idealistic trend in Gandhianism renders it incapable of giving priority to people and objective facts. Since ideals are more important, the ideal means for attaining the ideal Gandhian *Swarajya* are the best means for keeping the *status quo* undisturbed. The revivalistic strain in Gandhianism makes it blind to the clamant need for a scientific outlook, the outlook of making the present and future better than the past by using the techniques that new knowledge makes available. Hence it strives to revive a mythical *Ramrajya* of the past as a solution to the unrelenting problems of to-day. The paternalistic tendency in Gandhianism prevents it from linking up the *bourgeois* struggle for political independence with the struggle of the oppressed *kisans*, the suppressed *mazdoors*, the

depressed *Harijans*, and the repressed *Bhumijans* of India for social and economic emancipation. Thus, it labours in vain to *uplift the down-trodden* (mark the paternalistic expression used frequently by Gandhi) with the aid of the moneyocracy, religiocracy and millocracy and set them in self-contained villages virtually at the mercy of their traditional enemies. This is the background for the conflict between Gandhianists and the Left.

If Modern India is in a realistic mood demanding not revival but progress, not paternal favours but all-round justice, our leaders must come to grips with the central issue instead of toying with the five Gandhian ideas. That central issue is the urgent need for a consolidated and thoroughly planned offensive against *all* reactionary forces, Indian and British, religious, social, economic and political. The battle for India's freedom will never be won unless it follows not the strategy of the Dandi March but the strategy of a pincer-movement, directed against the paternalism of the Imperialist forces as well as the paternalism of the landlords and factory-lords, the princes and the 'twice-born'; against the revivalism of feudalists, communalists and loyalists; and against the idealism of all reformist camps of whatever religious or political persuasion. Let it be a non-violent battle, if possible. But the battle for India's freedom must be the battle of the *Ninety-eight per cent.*, as C. R. Das once called the masses, to wrest the supreme right of determining their own destiny from the iron grip of their oppressors, brown and white.

Gandhianism started out with glowing optimism that five Pandus could rout a hundred Kurus because their cause was just and their weapons holy. But the Pandus were routed on the Kurukshetra of Bardoli and every battlefield since, because Gandhianism made the supreme blunder of religiously imagining this age of steel to be some primitive age of myths and legends. *Swarajya* must be won by the masses for the masses. Small contingents of the middle class oppressed cannot fight against isolated injustices and hope to paralyse Imperialism. Reactionary elements that profit out of any entrenched injustice always combine to give battle to those who threaten that profitable injustice. Thus, Imperialism can always depend on the alliance of the princes and the rich title-holders, the Chambers of Commerce and the communalists, and all other vested interests and their mercenary intellectuals and hired hooligans. It is only a united front of all revolutionary forces available in the country that can ultimately win against the allied forces of reaction.

This united front cannot be achieved by Phillipics against Imperialism nor by infusing the masses with a religious devotion for the Mahatma. It cannot be achieved by spreading communal or racial hatred. To bring about a united front *Swarajya* must be defined in clear and unequivocal terms as the self-rule of a Socialist State in which the collective ownership of the resources of production abolishes all gradations and differences of class, caste or community ; in which the mechanism of the market is replaced by a planned economy of production and distribution ; and in which reciprocal justice and equality determine the quality

and purpose of freedom. To-day, nobody really knows what *Swarajya* will mean when it is an accomplished fact, except, perhaps, Gandhi and his chosen disciples. Will it mean an exchange of the Indian ruling class derived from the Indian moneyocracy for the British ruling class derived from the capitalists of Britain? Will it create feudal lords and feudal serfs in self-sufficient villages doomed to darkness and despair? Will it be the dictatorship of the proletariat or the despotism of an ascetic? What difference will it make to the oppressed millions, *the dumb millions*, as Gandhi calls them? The awakening masses of India must have a stirring motive to fight for India's liberty. If they are to be rallied to the banner of freedom they must be made conscious of their material and moral gain. They must have a stake in the adventure. When they know that India's *Swarajya* will mean their deliverance from want, ignorance, oppression, and fear, they will have a compelling motive to sacrifice, to fight, and to win.

When *Swarajya* is not a mystical experience but a concrete condition of the new social order created on the principles of equality and justice, no section of the Indian population will be ignored nor will the village be destroyed. In fact, the villages will advance, habits of work and modes of living will improve and the national outlook and way of thinking will become vitally progressive. The new civilization will still be predominantly agrarian but with this difference: it will not move backward into the future with its face turned piously to the past, but will march forward resolutely facing the inevitable present and preparing future

generations to continue the progressive programme and turn past achievements to good account. When the disinherited are no more disinherited, the inarticulate will no longer be inarticulate, because the uneducated will not remain uneducated. Freedom from oppression will lead to freedom from want. Deliverance from want will bring deliverance from fear. Salvation from fear will result in salvation from all kinds of bondage. This *moksha* will suffice. It will bestow physical, mental and moral health. A nation that is physically, mentally and morally sound will be neither indolent nor unambitious. The fatalism that is forced on the Indian people by constricted circumstances will be destroyed with those circumstances. Nothing will remain to blight the ambitions or drain the physical and moral energy of the people. A new self-confidence, a new energy, a new tenacity, a new enthusiasm will transform the Indian character. Such is the moral outlook of dialectical materialism.

The Gandhian Plan is based on the formula : Minimum Production + Isolation = Self-sufficiency. This will not solve any of the intricate problems that vex India. The Socialist Plan is based on the formula : Maximum Development + Maximum Employment = Progress. One can see with half an eye that such a plan in the nature of things will meet the needs of India's millions. India has most of the mineral wealth that other countries covet. India produces all the raw material that can supply the needs of her people. India has the man-power. Why should she not employ her

man-power to the fullest and use her natural resources to the fullest for the advancement and prosperity of the masses? Why should she export her wealth dust-cheap and pay exorbitant prices for the manufactures of other countries?

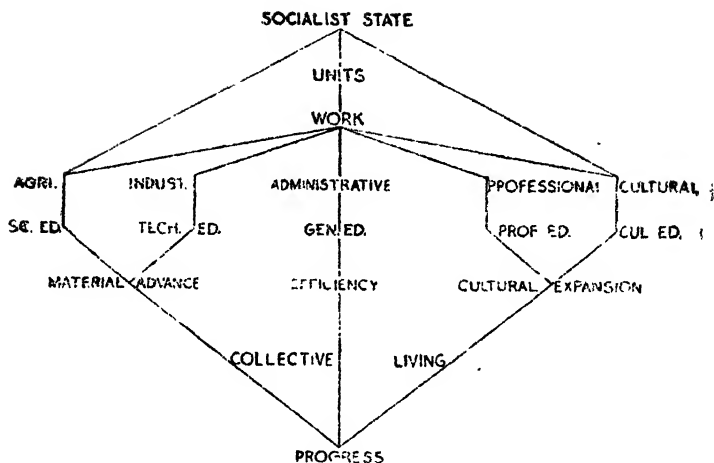
India gets 3 million tons of iron ore from her mines. Germany also gets 3 million tons of iron ore from her mines. Germany produces 23 million tons of steel, while India turns out about one and a half million tons of steel and charitably pays Britain and other countries 14 crores of rupees every year for iron and steel goods. It is the same sad story with almost all our mineral wealth and all our raw material. Do we lack coal or water to produce the electrical power for our factories? We get about 25 million tons of coal per year, but it is estimated that coal deposits in our mines amount to something like 10,000 million tons. There seems to be no danger of our coal running out for a thousand years. Next to Canada and the United States, India possesses the best resources of water-power in the whole world—approximately 27 million horse-power while Canada has 43 million and the United States 35 million horse-power. But how much does India use? Less than one-fiftieth, while Germany and Japan use about half of what they produce. Surely, electricity could be used for a thousand industrial purposes, and, incidentally, to light every village and to brighten the lives of our rural population with the radio and cinema and telephone. The cinema and radio could be used not only for entertainment but for educative purposes.

India has such a wealth and variety of natural resources that in every province we could have some industry. In fact, every group of ten villages could have flourishing factories along with smaller cottage industries as needs demand. The rapid development of both heavy and light industries along with cottage industries alone will divert part of the excess population now crowding on the land. Three out of every four Indians must live on the land. Only 53 out of every 100 acres of the cultivable land is now under the plough. The result is that approximately in one decade there is an increase of 12 to 15 millions of landless agricultural labourers, and the agricultural yield per acre decreases by 70 to 80 lbs. While in the United Kingdom a cultivator has about 17 to 20 acres and in Germany 10 to 12 acres, in India he must live on $1\frac{1}{2}$ to 2 acres of land. Is it any wonder that from 1921 to 1937 the peasants' debts mounted up from £400 million to £1,350 million? This desperate situation demands a far more radical treatment than the Gandhian Village Movement can imagine. A complete reorganization of the land system, improved methods of agriculture, a thoroughly planned industrial expansion along with numerous cottage industries, and nothing less than this can relieve the distress of the villager.

India must have large collective farms, not perhaps, as huge as the famous Russian *Gigant* which is 50 miles from north to south and 40 miles from east to west with 17,000 people working on it, but large enough to give several families enough to live on.

Instead of 2-acre fields which now have to support at least a family of five human beings and two bullocks, there could be 200-acre farms for every ten families. Neither the human beings nor the cattle would then be starved. Men and women would not grow old at 25 years of age. We would not need 18 crores of cattle to give us the same quantity of milk that Germany gets from two and a half crores. We have one-fifth of the world's population. We have one-third of the world's cattle. We have as much land as the whole of Europe excluding Russia. Our mineral wealth is unsurpassed. And yet we are so wasteful that we continue to be a poverty-stricken and backward people and allow others to exploit our wealth. Agriculture and mining with heavy industries and cottage industries growing out of a Socialist Economy will assuredly furnish maximum employment and maximum development not only for India's rich economic resources but also for her excellent intellectual and cultural resources. Life to the average Indian will not then be a burden. It will be a joy and a joyous challenge.

Perhaps, a diagram (given on the next page) will illustrate the progressive process envisaged in these pages. Allowance should be made for the transitional period. If the diagram is compared with the one given to illustrate the Gandhian Scheme it will be seen that the Socialist outlook is larger and more progressive. It is more realistic, withal, and takes into account the complexities of life. It does not shelve the problems that Society must solve in the course of its existence and development.



For instance, Socialism does not shelve the problem of mobilizing labour for large-scale production by denouncing large-scale production, but solves the problem and without the violation of personality which is inevitable under the mixed conditions of slavery, serfdom and wage-labour. The Kaliparaj and Dublas of Gujerat and Kathiawad, the Panchamas of South India, the Untouchables in all parts of the land, the landless labourers in the villages, the *mazdoors* in factories are all mobilized and compelled to work as slaves or serfs or wage-earners on terms distinctly to their disadvantage and under conditions distinctly subhuman. All such exploitation is a violation of personality, is unjust and dyed in blood-red violence.

One wonders sometimes at the temerity of Gandhian-ists who turn a blind eye to the conditions of slavery and serfdom that prevail in their own land, and are moved by righteous indignation to rail against the segregation of Negroes in America. Not that America is free from blame for the injustice and humiliation flung at her 'coloured' population, but that Gandhian critics of America seem unconscious of the worse injustice and humiliation heaped by their own countrymen on the heads of sections of their own people. This lamentable unconsciousness would hardly be possible in a socialist structure of society.

It is on the principle of voluntary association that a Socialist State mobilizes labour for large-scale production and not on the principle of coercion. The masses are virtual owners of all the resources of production being co-terminus with Society. Through the institutions that Society (i.e. the masses themselves) set up for the purpose, it frames the rules governing remuneration, conditions and duration of work and the like. Thus, the members of a Socialist Society *voluntarily* accept these rules. They are self-imposed not thrust upon them by an antagonist-class which wants to keep them in subjection. Each member of a Socialist Society is employer and employee in one, is at once both ruler and ruled. All the members are governed by the same necessity to work, the same rules of work, enjoy the same privileges and opportunities for improvement. Idleness or irresponsibility does not go unpunished. But the punishment is self-imposed. Thus, a Socialist Society undergoes a moral education which is unique and uniquely fitted to train a higher type of *satya-*

grahis, champions of truth and justice, purged of all the evils engendered by the caste-system, evils such as lack of initiative, a crippled sense of responsibility, moral turpitude in business, indecision and servility. Socialists cannot be seasonal *satyagrahis*. They learn to implement right relations every hour of their lives. Those who attack Marxian Socialism on the score that it is atheistic should not forget that although it says history is shaped by economic and not divine forces, although it refuses to drag God into every argument for equality and brotherhood, although it discards all idealism in favour of realism, it is Marxian Socialism more than any religion, more than any school of ethical idealism, that implements right relations by destroying the time-honoured machinery of injustice.

Nevertheless, this is not the strongest argument in favour of Socialism. True, it believes in justice as an article of faith. But this is only one of its many credentials. The most striking argument, one which should appeal to all Indians and especially to all Gandhianists, is that no system other than Socialism can create the economic, social and political conditions for habitual non-violence within each nation, and, therefore, among the nations. Just as it negates the motive for conflict between classes, castes and communities by liquidating all communities, castes and classes so it negates the motive for conflict between nations by abolishing national sovereignties. As within a Socialist State there is only one national family so in a world comprised of socialist states there is only one international family. Socialism is psychologically suited to India. It is a scientific projection of the

ancient 'joint-family' system of India. Only it is more realistic, and, hence, all-inclusive.

It does not indulge in any squeamish abhorrence of war but ruthlessly reconstructs a violent competitive into a non-violent co-operative system, both on a national as well as an international scale. It does not indulge in sentimental appeals for brotherhood and moral integrity but realistically uproots the motives for unbrotherly exploitation and the lust for wealth and power. It recommends no saintly 21-day fasts or rhetorical public prayers for self-purification and national unity but uncompromisingly creates a system in which self-discipline is inevitable and not only national but international integration is progressively actualized. Instead of preaching an ideal of non-violence, and distinguishing between the non-violence of the strong and the cowardice of the weak, Socialism strives to bring about concrete national and international conditions in which non-violence increasingly becomes the normal outlook, and there are no bullies and no cowards, either among people or among nations.

One does not mean that Socialism has a magic wand which will turn India into a free country overnight and solve all our problems and get rid of all our evils. One does not suggest that under Socialism the world will suddenly become a Garden of Eden inhabited by angels or fallen angels or angels in the process of falling. But one does mean that Socialism is the only system hitherto known which has a plan and a technique for the establishment of a social structure in which freedom, justice and unity are the structural realities. And one does suggest, without fear of con-

tradition, that Socialism is the only system hitherto known which is inherently capable of social integration of nationwide as well as world-wide dimensions. It offers no universal remedy for all economic evils, social maladies and political troubles. Nevertheless, it is the only system hitherto known which shows the world's intelligent, determined and courageous men and women how they can sacrifice intelligently, band together resolutely and fight like disciplined heroes and heroines to save the world from annihilation.

Capitalism, and its imperialist and Fascist off springs, have brought the world to the brink of utter ruin. The salvation does not lie in a return to Feudal or Tribal disorder, but in going forward to a new order. It is only by going beyond the present system of socio-economic and political organization to a Socialist structure of society that we can stop a repetition of the crimes perpetrated under a feudal and a capitalist regimes. History repeats itself. But history repeats itself only if men repeat the mistakes of the past. And history will be refashioned if men create a new system recognizing that no country can be free, progressive and happy unless there are no countries which are bound, backward and unhappy and no nations which dominate, exploit and molest. Socialism gives the disinherited masses of every country a compelling motive to unite in a comradeship of common struggle and suffering and overthrow the tyranny of to-day in order to usher in the freedom, justice and peace of To-morrow. Such a world revolution is in prospect. The gigantic forces in conflict to-day must inevitably lead to a world revolution. That mighty *Lok-yudha*, that world-con-

vulsing revolution of the people, will be the opening of a new era, *Sat-yuga* as our sages called it, an era of justice which is nothing but truth operative in human relations.

That will be the beginning of real progress when a realistic outlook gives to men their rightful place as equal partners in the ownership of the world's rich inheritance and the motive to use their material environment, through every improved technique of Science, not for exclusive gains but for Human advancement. It will be social progress. It will be progress for *all* and in *every* direction. It will create not bayonets and detention camps but the truest liberty, not class snobbery and racial bitterness but the healthiest right relations between man and man, and between man and machine. It will wash away hopeless poverty and soul-cramping despair in a flood of universal happiness. Its starting point will be degraded humanity. Its goal will be Humanity perfected. Its orbit will be not one class or caste or community or race or nation but the whole world. There can be no partial progress. The progress of Europe has meant the enslavement of Asia. Progress to be genuine must be worldwide.

To do her share in this glorious task India's masses must win India's freedom in a newly created Socialist State. A free India will then solve her own problems by collaborating with the world in solving world-problems. To that end and until the dawning of that day
.....*Inquilab Zindabad!*

